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# Welcome



JOHN CAMPBELL

As each new year starts, I can't help but look back on the previous growing season, ponder what I could have done differently and despair about what I never got around to doing. It's an impulse that leads to long periods standing at the window, staring out at my silent, still plot of bare sticks and seedheads, trying to conjure in my mind the version of the garden I wished I had achieved. The one I might yet achieve this year if I were to lift that plant, and move that one over there, and redo that section completely.

At times like these, inspiration in the form of expert plant picks is invaluable, and I know I will find the best and most sustainable suggestions in our 100 plants feature this issue (page 25), created for us by the lauded plantsman Cassian Schmidt, director of Hermannshof gardens in Germany. His selection takes into account the sorts of challenges we gardeners are likely to face as our climate changes, such as wetter winters and drier summers, as well as picks for increasing biodiversity.

If more inspiration is needed, try our design trends forecast (page 88) to find out what top designers believe will be in style and most talked about in 2023.

In January, it is also nice to imagine warmer climes, so let us bring a little sunshine into your winter with a gravel garden in France designed by James Basson (page 72) and a beautiful naturalistic garden created by Álvaro Sampedro in Spain (page 56), as well as our exploration of all the places to see amazing wildflower superblooms around the world (page 78).

Stephanie Mahon

STEPHANIE MAHON, EDITOR



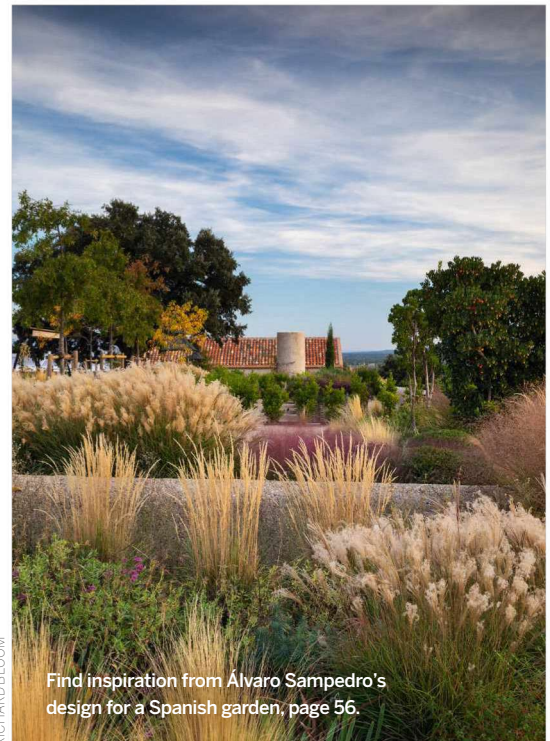
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RICHARD BLOOM

Find inspiration from Álvaro Sampedro's design for a Spanish garden, page 56.



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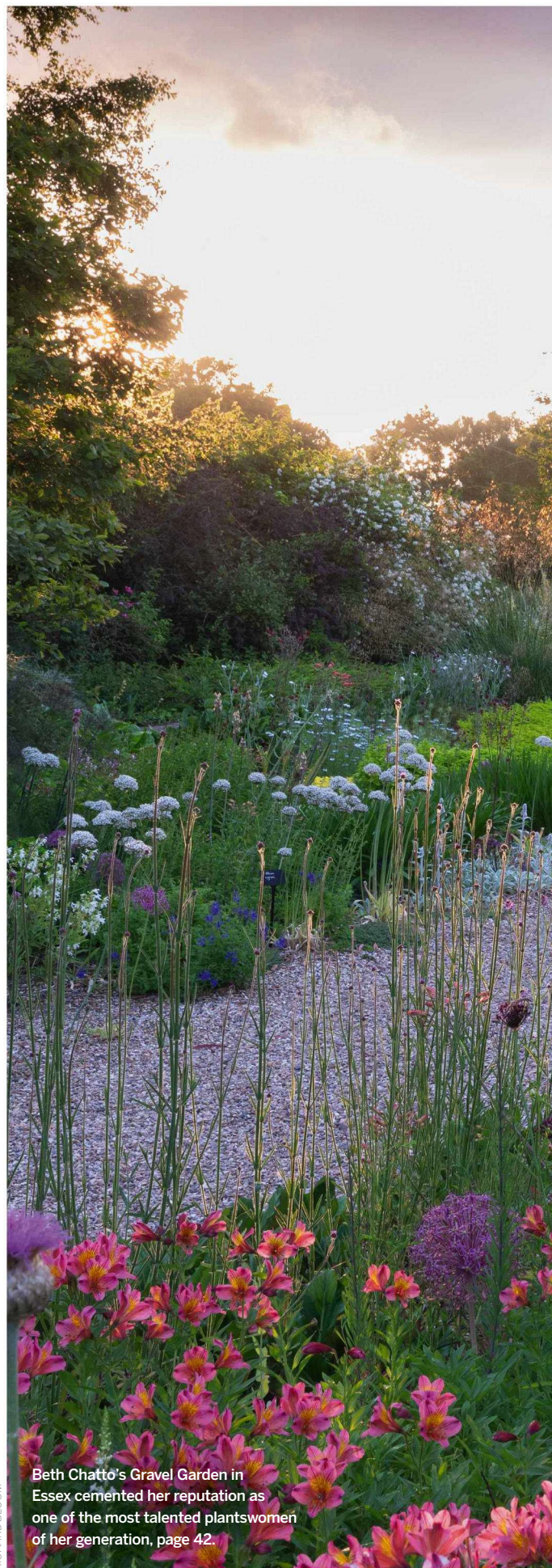
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Beth Chatto's Gravel Garden in Essex cemented her reputation as one of the most talented plantswomen of her generation, page 42.





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### COVER IMAGE

*Tulipa* 'Ice Stick'  
by Clive Nichols /  
GAP Photos

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- Save money when you subscribe to the digital edition of *Gardens Illustrated* – page 20

#### Our packaging

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## Contributors



### Catherine Horwood

Catherine celebrates the life of plantswoman Beth Chatto, page 42. *"Her philosophy on plant ecology and climate change was way ahead of its time."*



### Sabrina Rothe

Sabrina photographs a German snowdrop garden, page 66.

*"The outstanding collection of snowdrops is the shining star in January among all the evergreens and special collection of ferns."*



### Marian Boswall

Designer Marian visits a sustainably designed garden in the South of France that has been planted for wildlife, page 72. *"There are lessons for us all here in creating beauty in an austere environment."*

## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS



### James Basson

James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design, a practice specialising in low-maintenance and dry gardens. He is a fervent advocate for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

### Fergus Garrett

Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993. He is passionate about passing on his knowledge through student programmes at Dixter and worldwide lectures. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008 and an RHS Victoria Medal of Honour in 2019.

### Anna Pavord

Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent's* gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

### Dan Pearson

Dan is one of the UK's best-known garden designers, familiar to many through his gardening columns in the *Observer* magazine. Eight of his gardens, including the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan, have won awards and he was awarded Best in Show for his garden at Chelsea in 2015.

### Sarah Price

Sarah is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who gained worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012 and 2018, and was GMG Garden Columnist of the Year in 2016 for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.



# GARDENS

## ILLUSTRATED

### HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US

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UK/REST OF THE WORLD *Gardens Illustrated*, PO Box 3320,

3 Queensbridge, Northampton NN4 7BF.

USA/CANADA *Gardens Illustrated*, PO BOX 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495 USA.

#### Advertising enquiries

+44 (0)117 300 8805 [heather.golden@ourmedia.co.uk](mailto:heather.golden@ourmedia.co.uk)

#### Editorial enquiries

+44 (0)117 300 8622 [gardens@gardensillustrated.com](mailto:gardens@gardensillustrated.com)

*Gardens Illustrated*, Our Media Ltd (an Immediate Group Company),

Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST.

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## MAGAZINE CONTACTS

#### EDITORIAL

|                                 |                                          |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Editor                          | Stephanie Mahon                          |
| Deputy editor                   | Sorrel Everton                           |
| Art director                    | David Grenham                            |
| Deputy art editor               | Niki Goss                                |
| Production editor               | Juliet Giles                             |
| Digital editor                  | Daisy Bowie-Sell                         |
| Commissioning content editor    | Veronica Peerless                        |
| Editorial and digital assistant | Molly Blair                              |
| Botanical adviser               | Dr James Compton                         |
| Thanks this issue               | Matt Bishop, Hilary Brown, Abigail Whyte |

#### ADVERTISING

|                               |                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group advertising manager     | Laura Jones 0117 300 8509 <a href="mailto:laura.jones@ourmedia.co.uk">laura.jones@ourmedia.co.uk</a>          |
| Portfolio advertising manager | Heather Golden 0117 300 8805 <a href="mailto:heather.golden@ourmedia.co.uk">heather.golden@ourmedia.co.uk</a> |
| Senior brand sales executive  | Mia Dorrington 0117 300 8266 <a href="mailto:mia.dorrington@ourmedia.co.uk">mia.dorrington@ourmedia.co.uk</a> |
| Brand sales executive         | Mica Enwright 0117 300 8756 <a href="mailto:mica.enwright@ourmedia.co.uk">mica.enwright@ourmedia.co.uk</a>    |
| Advertising designer          | Parvin Sepehr                                                                                                 |

#### INSERTS

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Laurence Robertson | +353 (0)876 902208 |
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#### CIRCULATION, MARKETING, PROMOTIONS, PRESS & PR

|                                 |                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Newstrade manager               | John Lawton                                                                            |
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| Buyer                           | Karen Flannigan                                                                        |
| PR & Outreach Manager for Comms | Emma Cooney <a href="mailto:emma.cooney@ourmedia.co.uk">emma.cooney@ourmedia.co.uk</a> |

#### MANAGEMENT

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|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Chief executive officer           | Tom Bureau    |
| Group managing director Our Media | Andy Marshall |
| Managing director Our Media       | Marie Davies  |
| Head of brand marketing           | Rosa Sherwood |

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| Director of licensing & syndication | Tim Hudson |
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#### PRODUCTION

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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Production director            | Sarah Powell  |
| Group production manager       | Louisa Molter |
| Senior production co-ordinator | Katty Skardon |

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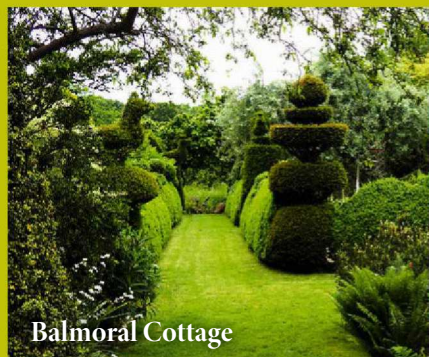
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PETER M CLARKE

30 May – 2 June 2023

## Artists' Gardens of Sussex

For this tour, we take in gardens that have been owned or created by artists, examining how these gardens play a role in their work. Visits include writer Virginia Woolf's Monk's House, and nearby Charleston, the country home of her painter sister Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant. We also visit the gardens of contemporary artists, including Balmoral Cottage, where Charlotte

Molesworth's elaborate topiary informs her paintings. Your base for the tour will be Ockenden Manor Hotel, a charming and tranquil Elizabethan Manor House.

**Price £3,250 per person**

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JASON INGRAM

3-6 July 2023

## New Dorset Gardens

From fossil-stacked cliffs to rolling chalk hills and rich pastures, countless creatives, both historic and contemporary, have been inspired by the rural county of Dorset. Led by expert plantsman Keith Wile, the tour highlights some lesser-known gardens, including gardens designed by Arne Maynard, and by the Bannermans, plus we visit River Cottage HQ, the creation of Hugh

Fearnley-Whittingstall, for a tour and lunch. Your hotel for the tour is 5-star Georgian Summer Lodge Country House Hotel in the heart of Thomas Hardy's Wessex.

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CLAIRE TAKACS

26-30 September 2023

## Dutch Design

The Netherlands is famous for horticultural excellence and innovations at the forefront of garden design. The tour introduces us to leading names in Dutch horticulture and garden design with works by Piet Oudolf, Jacqueline van der Kloet and Robert Broekema. Further visits explore some of their sources of inspiration, such as the gardens of the late Mien Ruys and the

magnificent historic, restored grounds of Paleis Het Loo. Your hotels are the country house Kasteel Engelenburg, and boutique hotel The Dylan in Amsterdam.

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SHOGO OIZUMI

24 September – 8 October 2023

## Japan's Hidden Garden Gems

Travel with Japan-garden expert Hannah Gardner to discover some of Japan's most compelling gardens. Starting on the island of Hokkaido, the tour explores naturalistic, contemporary gardens including the Tokachi Millennium Forest, designed by celebrated designer Dan Pearson. We'll also study the stunning autumn flora of the nearby mountains before transferring to

Japan's mainland, where we'll delve into the traditional gardens, culture and architecture of Tokyo, Kanazawa and Kyoto.

**Price £6,560 per person**

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# DIG IN

What's new, what's growing and what's going on this month



## Prints charming

Becky Crowley is a woman of many talents. The former cut-flower grower at Chatsworth House describes herself as part-gardener and part-artist, and combines her day job as a designer of cut-flower gardens with her passion for botanical photography. Later this month she's reopening her online shop, which offers a range of beautiful images of her intricate displays of seasonal flowers. Printed on archival paper, they're available in three sizes, with prices starting at £42. *Gardens Illustrated* readers can get an exclusive 10 per cent discount on all prints until 31 March 2023 using the code [GardensIllustrated10%](https://beckycrowley.com). [beckycrowley.com](https://beckycrowley.com)



# News

COMPILED BY MOLLY BLAIR

## ON THE LOOKOUT

This month, the RSPB is asking us all to spend an hour in our gardens counting birds as part of its annual Big Garden Birdwatch. Last year's count showed a rise in the numbers of several familiar feathered friends, including the greenfinch (pictured) and the house sparrow, which was 2022's most-recorded bird, although numbers for many were down from the first count in 1979. This yearly snapshot helps the RSPB keep track of how birds are coping with the challenges of a changing world, informing the ways in which it can take action to protect and preserve our wildlife. To find out how to get involved in this year's Big Garden Birdwatch (27-29 January), head to [rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](https://rspb.org.uk/birdwatch)



BEN HALL RSPB-IMAGES.COM

## Fundamental floristry

Hone your floristry skills at Bath Flower School's creative new Sustainable Floristry Foundation Course. Over five days, you will learn all the basic floristry tips and tricks while being encouraged to develop your own style. From kokedama and vase arrangements to flower crowns and wedding bouquets, each session will begin with a teacher demonstration, followed by the chance to experiment with your own creations. Courses run in January (9-13) and April (24-28) and cost £1,250, including tuition, materials and refreshments. [thebathflowerschool.com](https://thebathflowerschool.com)



DENISE BALLARD-WYLLIE

## 350 years in the making

London's oldest botanic garden is celebrating its 350th anniversary this year. In a packed calendar of talks, tours and panel discussions, Chelsea Physic Garden will be exploring three key themes – 'Horticulture for humankind', 'Unlocking our collections' and 'A physic garden for the future'. Events are lined up to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month, International Women's Day and Chelsea in Bloom, among others. The garden will also unveil its recently restored historic glasshouses and open its gates to more than 25 artists who will record a year in the garden. Their work, including that of Denise Ballard-Wyllie (pictured), will be on display at the Bankside Gallery as part of the celebrations. [chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk](https://chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk)

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# DIARY: JANUARY

COMPILED BY MOLLY BLAIR AND ANNIE GATTI

## 1 Entwined: Plants in Contemporary Painting

View artwork by leading British painters in this curated exhibition, supported by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, whose botanists provide commentary on the pieces. Until 28 January, Wednesday to Saturday, 11am-4pm. Free. Huddersfield Art Gallery, Unit 7, The Piazza Shopping Centre, Princess Alexandra Walk, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 2RS. Tel 01484 221964, [kirklees.gov.uk/beta/museums-and-galleries/huddersfield-art-gallery.aspx](http://kirklees.gov.uk/beta/museums-and-galleries/huddersfield-art-gallery.aspx)

## 2 Winter Sculpture Exhibition

Sculptures in a variety of styles are waiting to be discovered at the Winter Sculpture Exhibition at RHS Garden Rosemoor. More than 120 pieces by 32 artists are on show, with many for sale. Until 31 January, 10am-4pm. Admission free with garden entry (£12.95). RHS Garden Rosemoor, Great Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH. Tel 01805 624067, [rhs.org.uk](http://rhs.org.uk)

## 3 Your Garden in Winter

From propagation to preparations for the year ahead, this short course in Edinburgh will guide you through seasonal gardening tasks. 14 January, 12.30-3.30pm. £35. Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Arboretum Place, Edinburgh EH3 5NZ. Tel 0131 248 2909, [rbge.org.uk](http://rbge.org.uk)

## 4 Terrariums: Creating a Self-Sustaining World

Join terrarium expert Sanjana Thord-Gray for an exploration of cacti, succulents and tropical plants, and how to grow them. 15 January, 10am-3pm. £85. Walworth Garden, 206 Manor Place, London SE17 3BN. Tel 020 7582 2652, [walworthgarden.org.uk](http://walworthgarden.org.uk)

## 5 Small is Beautiful: Gardening in Confined Spaces

The historic Kew Mutual Improvement Society is run by Kew diploma students and this month one of its guest lecturers is Kew graduate Alys Fowler, who will talk about gardening in small spaces. Attend in person or watch online. 16 January, 6pm. £10. Lady Lisa Sainsbury Lecture Theatre, Jodrell Gate, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, London TW9 3DS. Tel 020 8332 5655, [kew.org](http://kew.org)

## 6 Pruning Fruit Workshop

This course is aimed at people who already know the basics of pruning fruit and want to improve those skills. Held in Waterperry's orchard, you will be offered individual advice on pruning apple and pear trees. 19 January, 10am-3.30pm. £135. Waterperry Gardens, nr Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1JZ. Tel 01844 339254, [waterperrygardens.co.uk](http://waterperrygardens.co.uk)

## 7 Introduction to Making Your Own Compost

Learn new skills in compost-making with expert tutors from Plumpton College. This one-day workshop covers all you need to get started, along with the best techniques, and information on the benefits of making your own compost. 20 January, 10am-4pm. £45. One Garden Brighton, Stanmer Park, Lewes Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 9SE. Tel 01273 892034, [onegardenbrighton.com](http://onegardenbrighton.com)

## 8 Celebration of Snowdrops

Harveys Garden Plants will be hosting its popular snowdrop day alongside other sellers of rare snowdrops from all over the country. 21 January, 11.30am-2.30pm. £4. Norton Village Hall, Norton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 3ND. [harveysgardenplants.co.uk](http://harveysgardenplants.co.uk)

## 9 The Sustainability and Stability of Plantings

Get first-hand advice from designer Tom Stuart-Smith in this online course on how to achieve sustainability in your planting designs. During the hour-long masterclass, Tom will reveal his planting failures as well as his successes, and analyse the reasons behind both. 24 January, 6-7pm. £24. [gardenmasterclass.org](http://gardenmasterclass.org)

## 10 Winter and Snowdrops Walk: Breakfast and a Guided Walk

A winter walk in the company of Nick Hamilton at Barnsdale Gardens (created by his father, Geoff) is an immersion in coloured bark and berries, hellebores and some 9,000 snowdrops, all individually planted. 16 February, 9.30am-12.30pm. £40. Barnsdale Gardens, The Avenue, Exton, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8AH. Tel 01572 813200, [barnsdalegardens.co.uk](http://barnsdalegardens.co.uk)

All information is correct at time of going to press, but may be subject to change. Tickets for events may be limited and may have to be booked in advance.



GRAHAM CROWLEY



ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH



STEVE HAMILTON



# The perennial perks of bare roots

The goal of every gardener is to create a beautiful garden that evolves and improves each year. To achieve this with minimum waste and maximum success, planting perennials bare rooted is the way forward

## In the night garden

**G**ardeners have been lifting, dividing and transferring perennials to new locations for centuries. This traditional, simple and successful way of gardening is making a comeback – it is taking trusted methods of the past and introducing them as the sustainable and affordable methods of the future.

You will benefit from growing perennials, and so will the environment and wildlife. As these reliable and recurring plants become increasingly popular, the demand for perennials supplied as bare root is also on the rise. Read on to discover why you should be tapping into this trend.

## Optimum health

When ordering plants online, it's essential that they arrive safely and in good health. Bare roots travel well – unlike potted plants, dormant roots can be packed securely into a parcel and there is no delicate growth that can easily become damaged in transit. The result is a pleasing and predictable experience when you open your parcel.

## Strong growth

All plants will produce new roots at the start of the growing season – these new roots are important but also extremely delicate. It is the young roots that absorb most of the water and nutrients the plant needs to survive, so it's crucial they're not damaged. A dormant bare root is harvested, transported and replanted all before the new-season growth takes place, which means the plant suffers minimal disturbance and can begin the next growing season in its new location at the correct time and with full vigour.

## Sustainability

There is far less waste with bare roots because they are lifted from fields as required. There's also very little waste involved in their production as they don't require potting on an industrial scale, a watering regime or huge amounts of glasshouse space. Outdoor cultivation in fields means fewer plastic pots, along with less water waste, electricity consumption, treatments and laborious plant care. To top it off, bare roots are compact in transit,

which means fewer trucks and delivery vans on our roads.

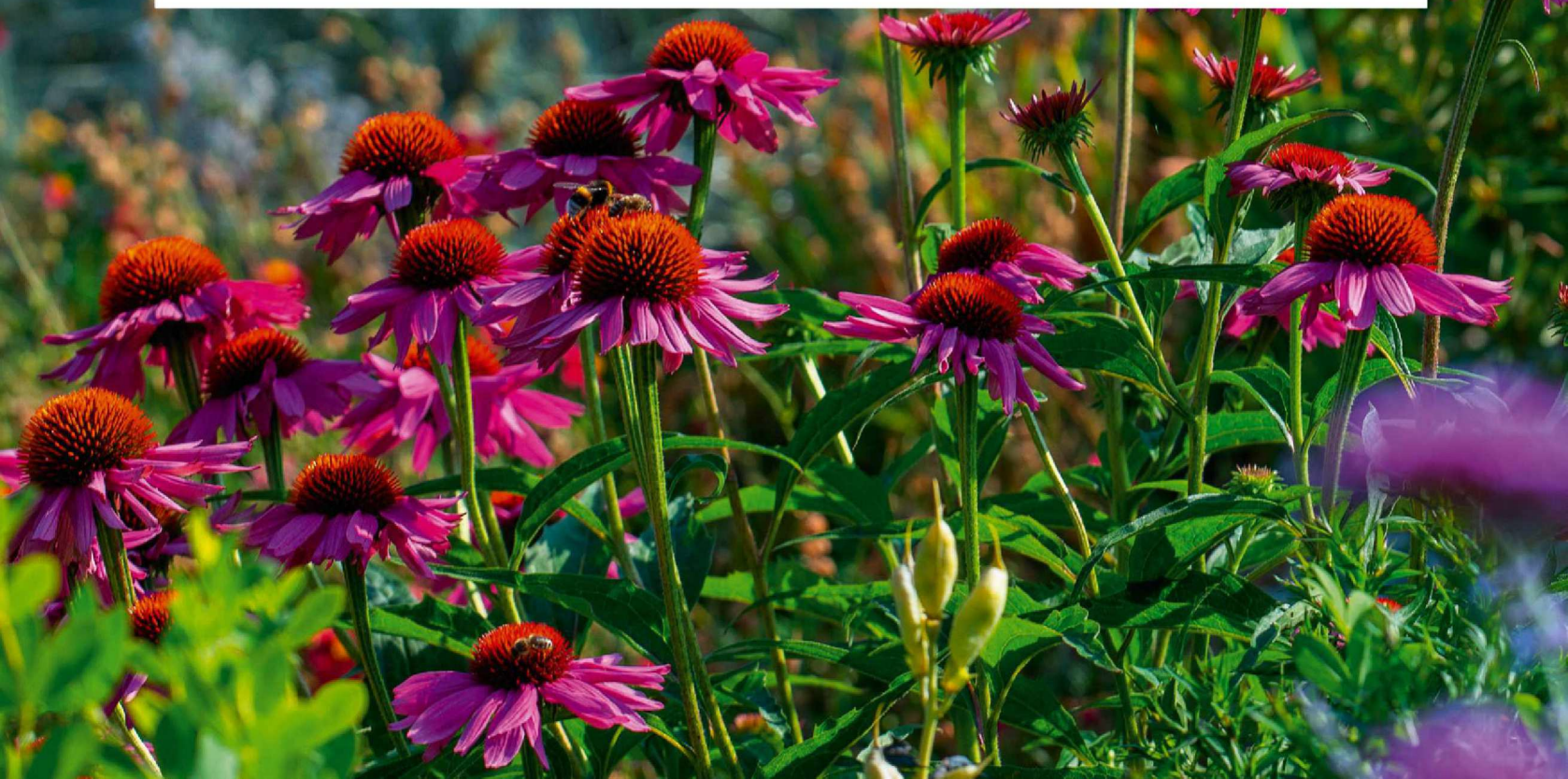
## Long-term value

A hardy perennial can be a plant for life and, over time, it will become one of the low-maintenance staples of the garden. Choose the right spot for perennials and they will establish into impressive clumps that return every year. Lower costs involved with producing and transporting bare root plants really pushes their price down, which makes starting a perennial garden more affordable from the outset.

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Enjoy a 20% discount on Farmer Gracy's entire range of bare root perennials and experience it for yourself. Visit [farmergracy.co.uk/perennials](https://farmergracy.co.uk/perennials) and use code **GIJAN23** to receive your discount. Valid until 31 January 2023.

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Sue visiting HPB's Blore Hall in the Peak District



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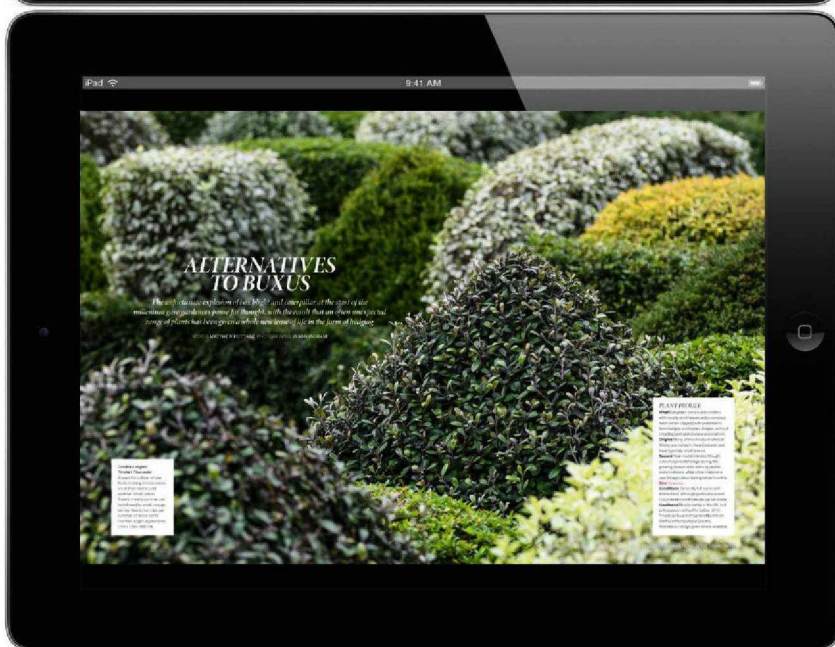
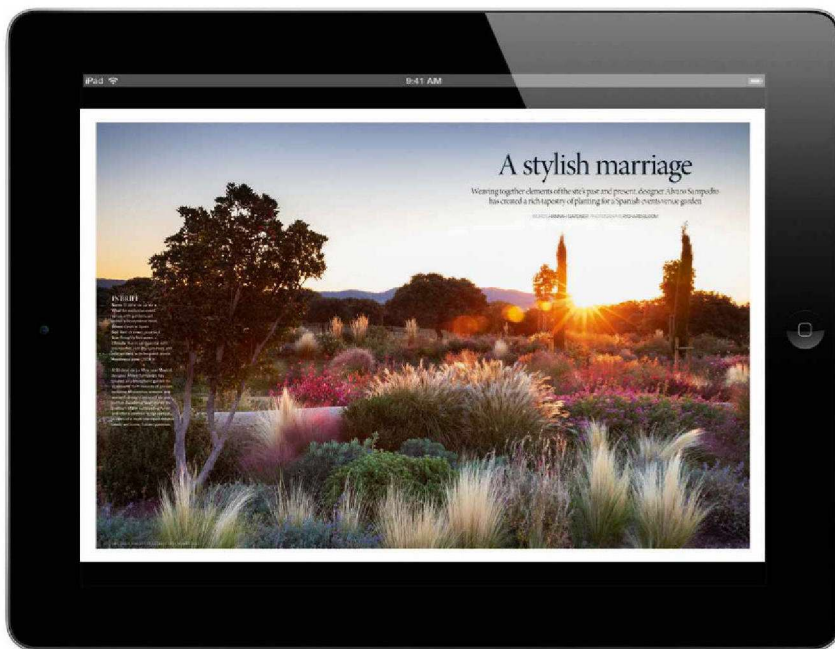
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# THE CONSTANT GARDENER

Head gardener **Benjamin Pope** is keeping busy this month in preparation for spring, but also taking time to enjoy some of the month's rare blooms, from tiny snowdrops to flowering cherries

ILLUSTRATION CLAIRE HARRUP



**C**old, dark nights and short gloomy days are de rigueur in January. But within the grey monotony, there are moments of clarity, where the winter sun shines

bright. These precious days lift the spirits and encourage us all not to give up on the coming of spring. I love to see the garden encrusted with icy crystals, sparkling as the low sun begins to rise. Eryngiums and teasel seedheads are sharpened with the touch of frost, as the sepia tones of faded hydrangea flowers become temporarily edged with glistening white lace.

Mixing texture and form is a great way to create interest during winter, as tidy clipped evergreens provide strong focal points to contrast with the ragged-brown stems, flowers and leaves of forgotten herbaceous perennials. If you don't want to clip, then selecting interesting, slow-growing evergreens is a way forward. *Abies balsamea* 'Hudsonia', *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Globosa Nana' and *Pinus strobus* 'Tiny Kurls' are all small conifers that ooze character and charm with their interesting textural foliage. Other favourites with attractive winter foliage include *Leucothoe* 'Zebulid', *Mahonia*

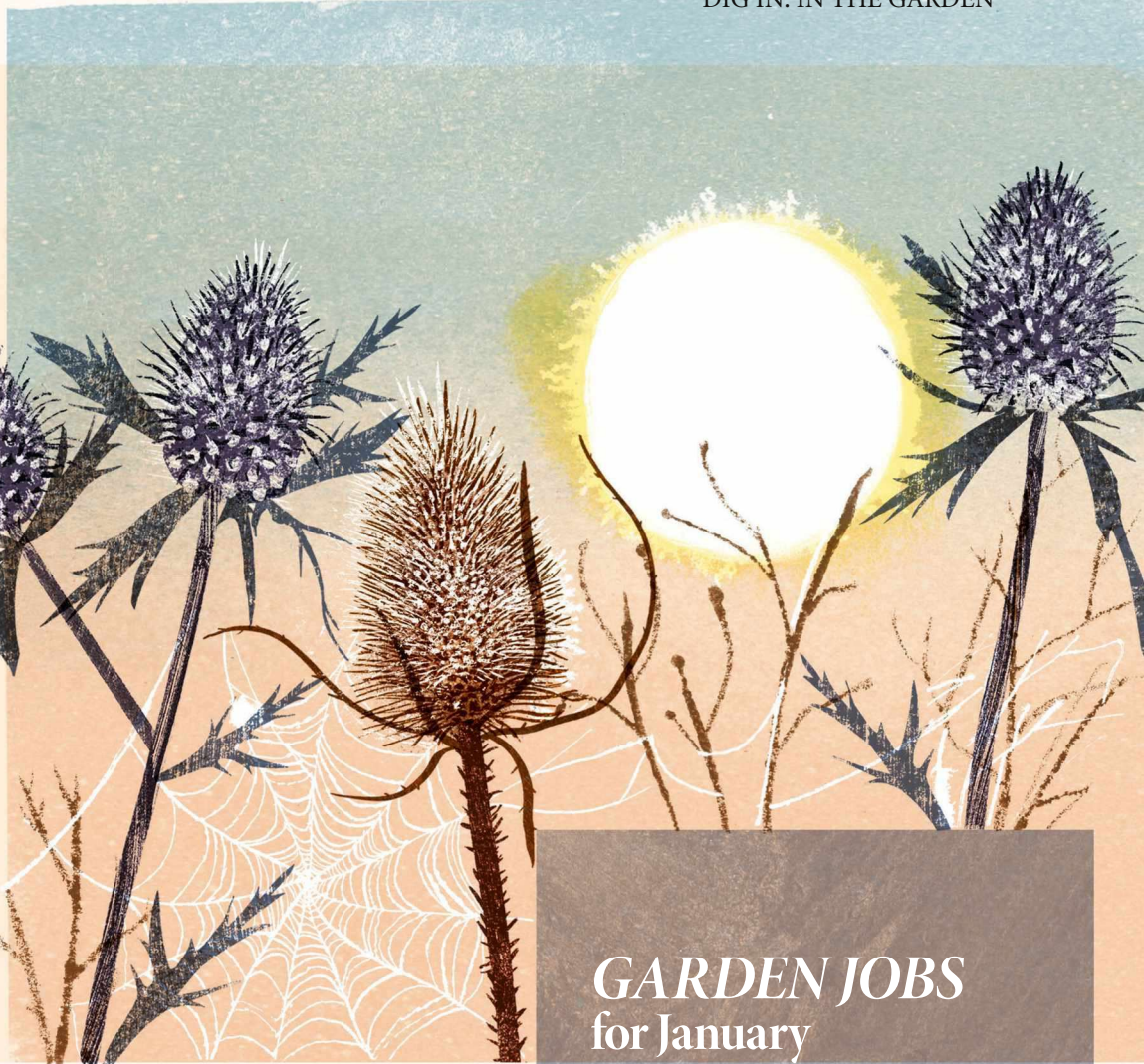
*eurybracteata* subsp. *ganpinensis* 'Soft Caress', *Nandina domestica* 'Fire Power' and *Rhododendron* 'Hydon Velvet'.

But even in January there are flowers to be enjoyed and plants raring to grow. Looking glorious against a winter sky, reliable *Prunus x subhirtella* 'Autumnalis' is in full blossom, while in shadier parts of the garden *Mahonia x media* 'Winter Sun' joins *Sarcococca confusa* to fill the air with their sweet-scented blooms.

Along with the plethora of hellebores (mentioned last issue), the mighty snowdrop begins to make an appearance this month, with green tips emerging above the soil soon to create a carpet of white. In sunnier borders, I plant snowdrops together with the frothy, winter green of *Ferula communis*, and strappy *Gladiolus tristis*, along with towering plumes of gently nodding *Euphorbia characias* 'Humpty Dumpty'.

When it comes to garden maintenance, I try to ignore this slower pace, keeping busy preparing for the growing season ahead. All too often the light fades and the cold night returns, though getting outside to notice a few garden details is the perfect tonic to banish the winter blues.





## GARDEN JOBS for January

### What to sow and plant

In terms of seed sowing, January is still a dark month, and outside is often too cold and wet. However, by the end of the month I generally find that I can't wait any longer and start off onions, broad beans and sweet peas in modules, first in the greenhouse but then quickly moving them somewhere cool (but frost free) to grow on. I find starting off sweet peas now easier than looking after them through all of winter, though these early module sowings usually require potting on and supporting with split canes or twigs, before planting out in spring.

As January is usually one of the coldest months, I would avoid planting perennials (which I've found generally do better if they can get growing straight away). Instead, plant trees and shrubs. Bareroot season is in full swing and planting a hedge is a great way to add structure to the garden and provide habitat for wildlife. This year I am going to plant the seldom-seen *Sorbus torminalis* (known commonly as both the checker tree and the wild service tree), where its flowers, leaves and fruit will provide a good source of food for a range of wildlife.

### What to harvest and pick

After early winter pickings of kale my attention turn to Brussels sprouts and kalette (flower sprout), both of which grow up the stem away from the ground, helping to avoid slug damage. To cook, I cut them in half and simply pan fry with garlic, pancetta (though capers would be a good vegetarian alternative) and some chilli for warmth. Both also work wonders in soups and stews, combined with root vegetables and a little orzo pasta.

Salad is still cropping under fleece, with reliable lambs' lettuce and chicory now leading the way. In the garden I like to place forcers (a large heavy bucket will do) on to established plants of rhubarb and sea kale, encouraging tender crops next month.

For the vase, a little imagination is required, though colourful stems of dogwoods and willow can create a winter fire. For capturing winter scent and charm, I like to cut a few sprigs of sweet box, arranged with individual racemes of *Mahonia* flowers and snowdrops. □

• Benjamin's *Gardens Illustrated* talk: 'Grow a year-round, productive garden' is available to view at [gardensillustrated.com/masterclass](https://gardensillustrated.com/masterclass)

**Tidy greenhouse** During the colder months of winter, it's important to maintain hygiene in the greenhouse. Regularly remove dead leaves and detritus from overwintering plants and cuttings to reduce the chance of fungal infections.

**Prune roses** Prune shrub, bush and climbing roses now while dormant, hard pruning back to strong growth or thinning and tying in lax stems as required. As a general rule, shrub and rambling roses require less pruning than floribunda and hybrid teas. Prioritise removing dead, dying and diseased wood.

**Plan summer pots** Decide on summer pot combinations, making sure you have the existing plants you will require or are ready to order specific species and cultivars to ensure your containers are a success.

**Prune fruit** While dormant, winter prune apple and pear trees, along with vines, blackcurrants and other forms of top fruit. Stone fruits, such as apricots, cherries and peaches, should be left and not pruned until late spring.

**Be inspired** Visit gardens that have been planted for winter interest to feel inspired in what can be a gloomy period. The Cambridge University Botanic Garden, Trentham, Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Wakehurst are all good to visit.





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# 100

## CASSIAN SCHMIDT'S

*resilient plants*



At Hermannshof, we use the German system of garden habitats to select plants according to their habitat requirements, sociability and aesthetic qualities. This is essential to achieve long-term, ecologically balanced and low-maintenance horticultural plant communities in gardens and urban green spaces. With climate change, this will become even more important for future planting design. My selection of 100 beautiful and sustainable plants is categorised according to growing conditions and use.





## For long-lasting interest

**1 AMSONIA 'BLUE ICE'** A neat mound of narrow, dark-green foliage is topped with large clusters of vivid, lavender-blue flowers. An amazingly vigorous plant with excellent yellow autumn colour. **Height (H)** 40cm. **Spread (S)** 40cm.

**Conditions (C)** Well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **Season of interest (SI)** May – November.

**Hardiness ratings (HR)** RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b†.

**2 BAPTISIA AUSTRALIS VAR. MINOR** An easy-to-grow, drought-tolerant perennial that I favour for its blue flower racemes, held well above blue-green, waxy foliage. Later, black seedpods add interest.

Looks good as loosely scattered specimens in a matrix of grasses or in any naturalistic prairie-style planting. **H** 80cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May – November. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

**3 BAPTISIA 'LEMON MERINGUE'** One of the best of the many new hybrids, praised for its beauty, size, long-term performance, drought tolerance and overall durability. Forms nice clumps with blue-green foliage, topped with dark-purple spikes and adorned with contrasting large, dark-yellow flowers. Attractive dark-purple seedpods. **H** 90cm.

**S** 60cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May – November. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**4 CORNUS 'PORLOCK'** In May and June, this semi-deciduous dogwood is almost fully covered with creamy-white flowers that fade to a beautiful reddish pink. Leaves turn vibrant orange-red in autumn. Loaded with red, strawberry-like fruits in late summer and autumn. **AGM\***. **H** 4-5m.

**S** 2.5-4m. **C** Moist, well-drained, neutral to acid, humus-rich soil; sun to part shade, sheltered. **SI** Summer – autumn. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-8b.

**5 DAHLIA 'BISHOP OF AUCKLAND'** One of my favourite dahlias, with contrasting purple- to black-flushed, dark-green leaves and single, red flowers with orange-yellow centres. I combine it with *Pennisetum villosum*, green-flowered zinnias, gauras, white *Ammi* and velvet-red *Amaranthus*. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist, well-drained, rich soil; full sun. **SI** July – October. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 9a-11.

**6 DAHLIA 'HONKA RED'** Star-like, single flowerheads with incurved florets that integrate with perennials and grasses. Over the past few winters we've left them in the ground, just covering them with a 30cm mulch layer of leaves. Watch for slugs in late spring when new shoots emerge. **H** 1.1m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist, well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – October. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 9a-11.

**7 EUONYMUS CARNOSUS 'RED WINE'** This spectacular, semi-deciduous shrub with elegantly arching branches is especially impressive when its glossy, leathery leaves turn fantastic shades of dark reddish-purple for several weeks in late summer and autumn. Attractive yellowish-pink capsules contain red-orange seeds in autumn. **H** 2.5m-3m.

**S** 2m-2.5m. **C** Moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** September – December. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

### 8 EUONYMUS CORNUTUS VAR.

**QUINQUECORNUTUS** An unusual, deciduous spindle shrub with narrow, glossy, bamboo-like leaves, dark-red flowers, and fruits with horn-like extensions that look like a jester's cap. The fruits open to reveal bright-orange seeds. I use it with *Ophiopogon*, low ferns and sedges in semi-shade. **AGM**. **H** 1.5-2m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Late spring – autumn. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

**9 MUHLENBERGIA RIGENS** Drought-tolerant Californian grass that forms large tussocks of grey-green, arching foliage, and bears long, spear-like plumes in late summer, elegantly exceeding the foliage. Makes an eye-catching accent when emerging out of a low, mat-forming groundcover. The spikes and leaves turn warm tan in autumn and remain attractive until late winter. **H** 1.3m. **S** 1.4m. **C** Dry, lean, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** July – February. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

**10 PANICUM VIRGATUM 'CHEYENNE SKY'** This compact cultivar never flops, and was a standout in our trials of a new generation of switch grass selections. The blue-green foliage turns violet-purple from midsummer. The top of the clump becomes a mass of reddish-purple plumes in September, remaining attractive until late winter. **H** 80cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** July – February. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

**11 POA LABILLARDIEREI** I love this wonderful, semi-evergreen tussock grass. Forms a dense clump of arching, very slender, blue-green foliage, with airy sprays of purplish flowers held above the foliage in midsummer. Deserves to be better known. **H** 80cm. **S** 70cm. **C** Fertile, moisture-retentive but well-drained soil; full sun, sheltered. **SI** Year round. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b.

**12 SALVIA 'AMISTAD'** A half-hardy shrubby perennial with velvety purple flowers from the start of summer until first frost. Midnight-blue calyces and stems give it even more visual punch. Enjoys a sheltered, sunny position and is easily grown in pots. Loved by bees. **AGM**. **H** 1.5m. **S** 80cm. **C** Moist, well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** June – November. **HR** RHS H3, USDA 9a-11.

**13 SALVIA X JAMENSIS 'NACHTVLINDER'** A top choice for any hot dry spot and for gravel gardens. Surprisingly hardy, this slowly suckering, bushy sub-shrub is evergreen if not cut back by frost, with small, aromatic, mid-green leaves. Dark maroon-purple flowers in loose terminal racemes are borne from late spring to autumn. Loved by bees. **AGM**. **H** 70cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Light, moderately fertile, well-drained soil; full sun, sheltered. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b. ▷





An easy-to-grow, drought-tolerant perennial, *Baptisia australis* var. *minor*'s blue flower racemes are held above blue-green, waxy foliage





15

▷ **14 SCHIZACHYRIUM SCOPARIUM 'HA HA TONKA'** An extraordinarily hairy, bluestem grass I selected with Piet Oudolf from a patch of seedlings at Hermannshof in 2008. The hairs appear white when backlit, giving the whole plant a silvery appearance. **H** 90cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Lean, very well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** July – February. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

**15 SILPHIUM MOHRRII** A clump-forming, drought-tolerant perennial with very rough, hairy leaves and stems, topped by little, moonshine-yellow sunflowers, borne over a long period in summer. Attractive seedheads. **H** 90cm-1.2m. **S** 50cm. **C** Light, moderately fertile, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



19

**16 STIPA CALAMAGROSTIS 'ALGÄU'** One of the best long-lived grasses for landscaping. A clump-forming, cool-season grass with narrow, arching leaves and feathery, silvery-green flower panicles in summer. It has slightly larger flowers over a longer period than the species. These turn buff-coloured and remain attractive all winter. **AGM**. **H** 80-90cm. **S** 80cm. **C** Moderately fertile, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – January. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b.

## For dry, sunny areas

**17 ALLIUM ATROPURPUREUM** Multi-flowering, semi-globose clusters of deep burgundy-red florets. Perfect for steppe plantings with salvias and grasses. Self-seeds if conditions are right. **H** 80cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Rich, medium-dry, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Early summer. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**18 ALLIUM 'FORELOCK'** One of my favourite alliums for open Mediterranean and steppe plantings. Elegant, deep-purple drumsticks with contrasting white stamens on tall stems, moving slightly in the wind. Good self-seeder. **H** 1.6m. **S** 8cm. **C** Rich, medium-dry, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Early summer. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 4a-8b.

**19 ALLIUM 'SUMMER DRUMMER'** A spectacular Mediterranean species. Sends out tall, purple-mauve drumsticks in midsummer. Plants send out their new fans of chive-like leaves in September, overwintering fully green. Small groups look dramatic in open steppe plantings. **H** 1.8m. **S** 20cm. **C** Rich, medium-dry, well-drained loam; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 7a-10a.

**20 ASCLEPIAS TUBEROSA** A drought-tolerant prairie plant, thriving even in poor, sandy or gravelly soils. Bright-orange flowers in June, followed by interesting seedheads in August to September. Attracts butterflies. **H** 80cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.

**21 X CHITALPA TASHKENTENSIS** A small, deciduous tree with a beautiful open shape, willow-like leaves, covered with clusters of large, deep-pink flowers from June to August. Adapted to low humidity and summer drought. **H** 3.5-4.5m.

**S** 3.5m. **C** Moist to dry loam, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 7a-11.

**22 ECHINACEA PALLIDA 'HULA DANCER'** An elegant seed strain of this familiar prairie plant with almost pure-white, drooping rays, arranged around an eye-catching greenish cone. Attractive seedheads from August to January. **H** 80-90cm. **S** 20cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-8b.

**23 ECHINACEA PARADOXA** A coneflower with unusual, golden-yellow, drooping ray flowers. If planted in dry conditions on well-drained soils, can be very long-lived. Sensitive to competition, so best planted together with low, clump-forming prairie grasses in low density. **H** 70-80cm. **S** 20cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**24 EUPHORBIA NICAENSIS** A low-growing, Mediterranean sub-shrub with attractive, evergreen, bluish-green leaves and large, acid-yellow flowers over a long period. When planted on lean, gravelly soils, the bracts have an intense red colouration in August and September. Perfect for gravel gardens. **H** 30-40cm. **S** 25cm. **C** Light, well-drained, dry soil; full sun. **SI** June – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-10a.

**25 GENISTA AETNENSIS** An elegant large shrub or small tree with broom-like slender branches, which are covered with small, yellow, pea-like flowers in early June. Well adapted to summer drought and surprisingly hardy. **AGM**. **H** 2.5-3.5m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Well-drained, gravelly soil; full sun. **SI** June – October. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

**26 GERANIUM SANGUINEUM 'ALBUM'** One of the best European geraniums for dry conditions in full sun or the sunny woodland margin. Works well when dotted through naturalistic mixed perennial plantings, but also in groups at the front of a border. A sterile selection that doesn't seed around like the magenta wild form. **AGM**. **H** 40cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained loam, chalk; full sun to light shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**27 LINUM NARBONENSE** Small, evergreen sub-shrub, native to the southern Mediterranean. Its large, clear-blue flowers stay open all day, unlike *Linum perenne*, which drops its petals before midday. Best used among other drought-tolerant, delicate perennials and airy grasses. **H** 60cm. **S** 15cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil, prefers chalk; full sun. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-10a.

**28 MONARDA BRADBURYANA 'OZARK'** A selection I introduced in 2004. Native to dry woodlands and glades in the Ozarks, it prefers sun, but can tolerate light shade. Shiny foliage emerges dark-purple in spring. Flowers early, and looks good in a prairie setting with grasses. **H** 60cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun or part shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.



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**29 PHLOMIS BOURGAEI** I first fell in love with this evergreen, yellowish-grey-leaved sub-shrub on a hike in southwestern Turkey, when I saw it covered with large golden-yellow flowers. A perfect addition to any garrigue-like planting or gravel garden. Best planted in a sheltered, summer-dry spot. **H** 80cm-1.2m. **S** 70cm. **C** Dry, gravelly soil; full sun. **SI** October – November. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 7a-11.

**30 RUELLIA HUMILIS** A useful, low-growing companion perennial for dry, prairie plantings, best scattered into a matrix of low-growing, warm-season grasses, such as *Bouteloua*. Large petunia-like blue flowers from June to August. **H** 25-35cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Dry, well-drained soil; full sun to light shade. **SI** June – August. **HR** USDA 4a-8b.

**31 SESLERIA ARGENTEA** Seslerias are the best semi-evergreen grasses for matrix plantings or intermingled in mixed plantings. This little-known species grows in rocky areas or in the dappled shade of open oak forest. Silvery flower spikes in summer. **H** 35cm. **S** 35cm. **C** Mesic to dry, well-drained loam; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5b-8b.

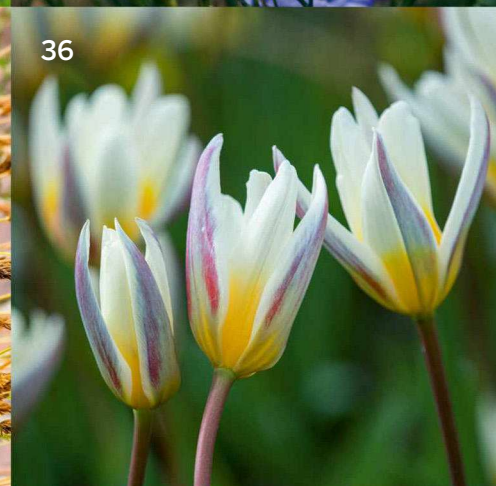
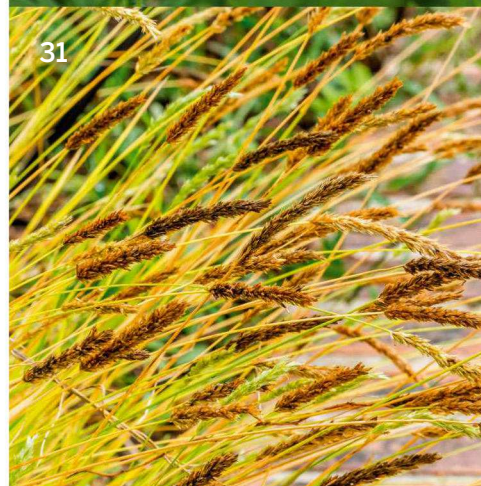
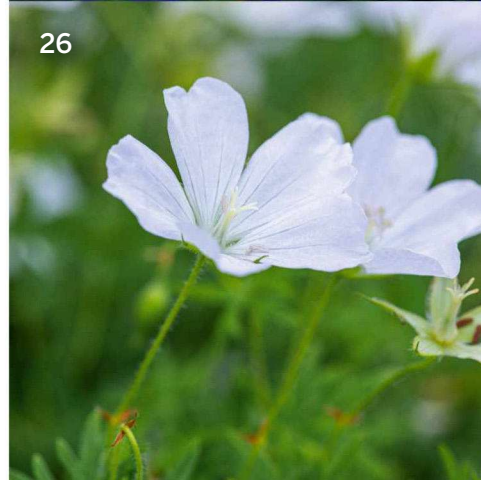
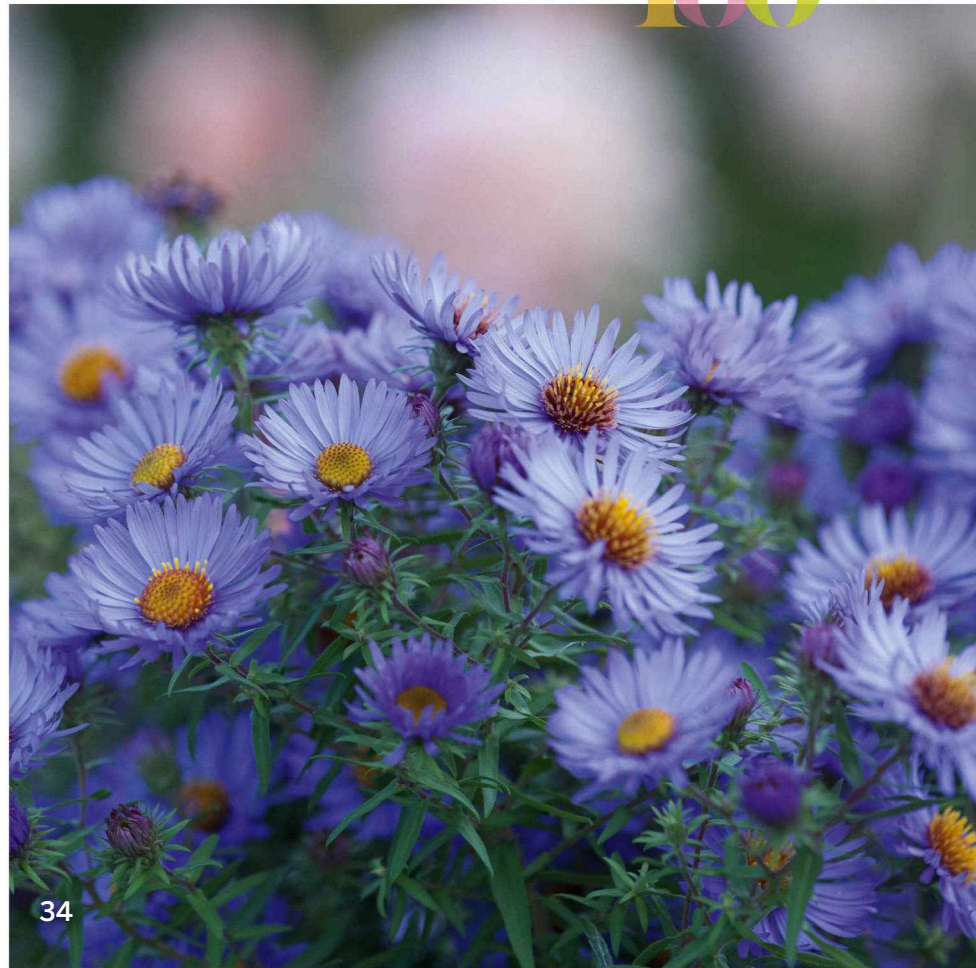
**32 SESLERIA 'GREENLEE'** A low-growing hybrid of *S. autumnalis*. Well-behaved semi-evergreen cool-season grass, is useful as a groundcover matrix or understorey, and for planting through. Mid-green spring foliage is joined in summer by airy flower spikes. **H** 35cm. **S** 35cm. **C** Mesic to dry, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**33 SPOROBOLUS HETEROLEPIS 'ODOROUS CLOUD'** Fine, arching foliage and diffuse clouds of airy flowers shimmer on this grass that looks great with echinacea seedheads. Orange-yellow autumn colour. **H** 70cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Medium-dry, well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** Flowers August – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

**34 SYMPHYOTRICHUM OBLONGIFOLIUM 'OCTOBER SKIES'** A robust, mildew-free aster from the midwestern prairies. The large blue flowers cover the plants for several weeks from late September until mid November. **H** 55-70cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Mesic to dry, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** October – November. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-8a.

**35 TULIPA 'HONKY TONK'** A lovely tulip with slightly pointed, sulphur-yellow flowers. Best in small groups of 10-15 bulbs. Looks good with *Euphorbia cyparissias* in low steppe plantings. **H** 25cm. **S** 5cm. **C** Medium-dry, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Spring. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

**36 TULIPA 'ICE STICK'** One of the earliest and most persistent tulips for rock gardens or for planting around the base of deciduous shrubs and small trees, where it appreciates the summer drought. **H** 20cm. **S** 5cm. **C** Rich, medium-dry, well-drained soil; full sun to light shade. **SI** Spring. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b. ▶







### ▷ 37 *TULIPA ORPHANIDEA WHITTALLII* GROUP

A wonderful, warm orange-red species tulip. As in many species-like tulips, the elegant flowers need sunlight to open fully and to glow from backlight. AGM. **H** 20cm. **S** 5cm. **C** Medium-dry, well-drained soils (needs summer drought); full sun. **SI** Spring. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

**38 *TULIPA 'PEPPERMINTSTICK'*** A super-elegant tulip for rock gardens and low steppe plantings among grasses. Bi-colour white and red flowers in late April. Scatter bulbs or plant in small groups. **H** 25cm. **S** 5cm. **C** Medium-dry, well-drained soils (needs summer drought); full sun. **SI** Spring. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

**39 *TULIPA PRAESTANS 'VAN TUBERGENS VARIETY'*** A wonderful, multi-flowered, warm-red species-like tulip. Quite adaptable to different soil conditions. Looks stunning together with blue or white *Anemone blanda*. **H** 30cm. **S** 8cm. **C** Rich, medium-dry, well-drained soil; full sun to light shade. **SI** Spring. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

## For damp, shady areas

**40 *ADIANTUM PEDATUM*** This deciduous fern with a round to oval shape has delicate, fan-shaped, light-green fronds, which take on a soft-yellow tint in autumn, and shiny black stems. A wonderful textural contrast and companion to many woodland species. **H** 40-50cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil; part to full shade. **SI** April – October. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

**41 *ARUNCUS 'HORATIO'*** Graceful spikes of creamy flowers on red stems. In autumn, blooms hold their structure, turning a biscuity colour, while the ferny foliage turns a spectacular coral-red. Best planted in groups. **H** 1.2-1.5m. **S** 70cm. **C** Moist but well-drained to poorly drained clay, loam; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – July. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

**42 *CAREX OSHIMENSIS 'EVERILLO'*** A clump-forming evergreen sedge with arching lemon-green leaves that intensify over winter. I combine it with dark-red, plum- and slate-coloured hellebores. **H** 35-40cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist, seasonally dry, well-drained soil; sun to partial shade. **SI** Year round. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

**43 *DISPORUM LONGISTYLUM 'NIGHT HERON'*** A graceful, vase-shaped cultivar with fine, evergreen leaves. New shoots emerge tinged with dark purple followed by cream-green, bell-shaped flowers. Best for milder regions. AGM. **H** 1.2-1.7m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil; part to full shade. **SI** May – December. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.

**44 *EPIMEDIUM RHIZOMATOSUM*** A useful, evergreen groundcover with bronze-yellow flowers in May. Combines well with *Ophiopogon*, *Liriope* and evergreen ferns and sedges. **H** 40cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil; part to full shade. **SI** April – May. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

### 45 *HAKONECHLOA MACRA 'ALL GOLD'*

A wonderful cultivar of the popular Japanese woodland grass, with elegant arching leaves that are an intense greenish-yellow in spring, turning a lighter green in summer. Beautiful on the edges of paths. I combine it with pink, magenta or red-flowered persicarias. **H** 50-60cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; partial shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**46 *PODOPHYLLUM 'SPOTTY DOTTY'*** One of the most unusual foliage plants for shade. The umbrella-like, slightly hairy leaves are nicely dotted and spotted with distinctive marks that resemble a camouflage pattern. Combines well with ferns, hostas and *Polygonatum*. AGM. **H** 40cm. **S** 30-40cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; part to full shade, sheltered spot. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-9b.

**47 *PODOPHYLLUM VERSIPELLE*** A plant for lovers of subtropical-looking plants. The large umbrella-like, partly dissected dark-green leaves showing a wonderful shiny surface when young. It's stunning to watch the new shoots when they emerge from the ground and unfold like little umbrellas in early May. Increases slowly by rhizomes. **H** 70cm. **S** 1m. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; part to full shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

**48 *POLYSTICHUM POLYBLEPHARUM*** This Japanese lace fern makes a decorative design element. Its fully evergreen, pinnate, medium-green leaves have a wonderfully glossy shine. When used in small groups, it combines well with evergreen sedges and clump-forming epimediums. AGM. **H** 40-60cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil; part to full shade. **SI** Year round. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**49 *SARUMA HENRYI*** A wonderful, clump-forming, very long-lived perennial with beautiful heart-shaped, hairy leaves and sulphur-yellow flowers that develop continuously over several weeks from early May to July. The young, emerging leaves are tinged brown and are attractive through spring and summer. The genus, which is related to *Asarum*, comes from the dense forests of China where it is found along streams. **H** 40-50cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist but well-drained, humus-rich soil; part shade. **SI** April – October. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

**50 *SYNEILESIS ACONITIFOLIA*** A wonderful but rarely cultivated gem that is native to the rich deciduous woodlands of South Korea. The palmate, shredded leaves resemble those of an *Aconitum* but are usually much larger. This rare, clump-forming perennial is not one you grow for its quite inconspicuous flowers but for the very attractive leaves that emerge like little hairy mushrooms in early April. **H** 50cm (leaves), 1.2m (in flower). **S** 40cm. **C** Slightly dry to moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil; part shade. **SI** April – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b. ▷





One of the most unusual foliage plants, *Podophyllum* 'Spotty Dotty' has leaves with marks resembling a camouflage pattern





*Danae racemosa*'s elegant arching branches have glossy, green foliage, decorated in autumn and winter with orange-red berries



▷ **51 SYNEILESIS PALMATA** A wonderful textural woodland species. Taller than *S. aconitifolia*, with larger and coarser palmate leaves that are less deeply shredded and turn yellow in autumn. Takes three to four years from seed to get good plants, but when the plants are well established, they can even grow in dry shade. **H** 60-80cm (leaves), 1.5m (in flower). **S** 40cm. **C** Slightly dry to moist but well-drained, humus-rich loam, clay; part shade. **SI** April – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

## Evergreens for dry shade

**52 CAREX MORROWII 'IRISH GREEN'** One of the best sedge groundcovers that is also one of the easiest to grow. Always looks neat with glossy, dark-green leaves, and once established thrives even in dry shade. I prefer this natural-looking green to variegated selections. **H** 40-50cm. **S** 70cm. **C** Moist to seasonally dry, humus-rich soil; part to full shade. **SI** Year round. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

**53 DANAE RACEMOSA** Slow-growing, evergreen sub-shrub with elegantly arching branches that have glossy, green, leathery foliage, decorated in autumn and winter with orange-red berries. Its creamy-white flowers appear from May to June. Should be used much more for landscaping in milder regions. **AGM**. **H** 60-80cm. **S** 80cm. **C** Moist to summer dry, well-drained loam, clay; sun to full shade. **SI** Year round. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 7a-10b.

**54 EPIMEDIUM PAUCIFLORUM** One of the best epimediums for dry shade. Slow to establish, but after some years it will become a persistent groundcover, forming a low carpet of small, spiny evergreen leaves, which emerge mottled with bronze in spring. The large, white to pale-pink flowers stick out only slightly above the leaves. **H** 20cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Mesic to summer dry, well-drained soils, adaptable; light to full shade. **SI** April; year round for foliage. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

**55 EPIMEDIUM PUBIGERUM** This attractive, clump-forming species with leathery, evergreen leaves is well suited for planting under trees, as it is relatively drought tolerant. The delicate masses of tiny, creamy-white flowers are held well above the foliage. A non-aggressive companion for many other shade plants. **H** 50cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist to summer-dry, well-drained soils, adaptable; dappled or part shade. **SI** April; year round for foliage. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

**56 EUPHORBIA AMYGDALOIDES SUBSP. ROBBIAE** Dark-green, shiny leaves are the characteristic of this vigorous, broad-leaved, drought-tolerant groundcover, forming larger patches via runners. It is important that it is not exposed to direct winter sun. In spring, bright greenish-yellow flowers appear above the foliage, which should be cut back after flowering. **H** 40-50cm. **S** 80cm. **C** Mesic to summer dry, well-drained loam, clay; part to full shade. **SI** April – May; year round for foliage. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

**57 HELLEBORUS ARGUTIFOLIUS** I've often encountered this wonderful evergreen species on my hikes on the Mediterranean island of Corsica, where it grows in dry pine forests and sunny screes in higher elevations. It's a super hellebore to use in difficult situations such as dry, sunny woodland edges. The large, apple-green flowers are attractive from February to late May, when the old flower branches should be cut back. **AGM**. **H** 60-70cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Mesic to summer dry, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** January – May; year round for foliage. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-8b.

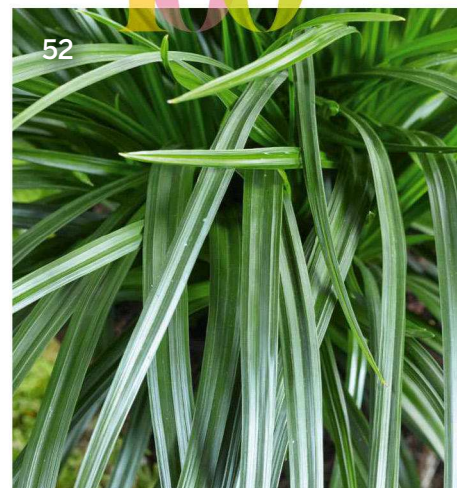
**58 HELLEBORUS FOETIDUS WESTER FLISK GROUP** A fairly short-lived hellebore but one that flowers from late winter to spring, and self-seeds, so a useful gap filler. Its evergreen palmate leaves are a grey-green colour, providing a good foil for the clusters of pale-green bells that hang from its upright, dark-red stems. **H** 60cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist to summer dry, well-drained chalk, clay, loam; full sun to part shade. **SI** January – April; year round for foliage. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**59 IRIS FOETIDISSIMA VAR. CITRINA** For me this is the most important structural plant for dry shade, with evergreen, sword-like, stiff leaves. Its inconspicuous, soft-yellow flowers are tinged with violet, and followed by very attractive capsules releasing coral-red berries that persist well into winter. Self-seeds in mild climates. **H** 60cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist to summer dry, well-drained chalk, clay, loam; sun to full shade. **SI** May; leaves and fruits all winter. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 6a-9b.

**60 LIRIOPE MUSCARI 'BIG BLUE'** One of the toughest and longest-living groundcover perennials, even growing in dry shade and under root pressure conditions. The dark-green, grass-like leaves are fully evergreen, and dark violet-blue, muscari-like flower spikes appear above the foliage from September to November. **H** 30-40cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist to summer dry, well-drained loam, clay; light to full shade. **SI** Autumn; year round for foliage. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-10b.

**61 POLYGONATUM LATIFOLIUM** A little-known, drought-tolerant perennial from eastern Europe, with elliptic shiny and hirsute leaves on sideways bending shoots. A wonderful and contrasting textural plant with greenish-white, pendent flowers. Slowly spreads by rhizomes to form nice patches. **H** 40cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist to summer dry, well-drained chalk, clay, loam; light to full shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**62 POLYPODIUM X MANTONIAE 'CORNUBIENSE'** This vigorous hybrid form of the southern polypody fern is very useful for plantings in summer-dry shade under deciduous trees and in shady rock gardens. The elegant pinnatifid fronds are evergreen but can become summer dormant if the conditions are too stressful. **AGM**. **H** 30cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist to summer dry, humus-rich, well-drained soil; light to full shade. **SI** Year round. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b. ▷







64

▷ **63 POLYSTICHUM SETIFERUM** With beautifully dissected, evergreen fronds, this fern works well in the light shade of a deciduous tree. Over the recent severe summers, it has proved to be one of the most drought- and heat-tolerant ferns. **H** 70cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist to summer dry, humus-rich, well-drained soil; light to full shade. **SI** Year round. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 6a-8b.

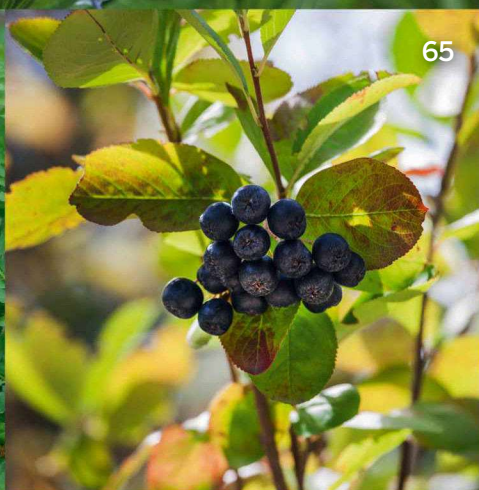
## For winter wet

**64 AMSONIA TABERNAEMONTANA VAR. SALICIFOLIA** An attractive, clump-forming perennial, with willow-like leaves that turn from mid-green to buttery yellow, and bronze in autumn. The open clusters of star-shaped flowers are an intense metallic-blue and appear from early May. Emerges with dark, smoky-purple shoots. **H** 1m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist, well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b.

**65 ARONIA MELANOCARPA 'VIKING'** An upright, deciduous shrub with dark-green leaves that turn an intense, dark purple-red in autumn. Profuse, large clusters of white flowers in late spring, followed by edible purple-black berries, much appreciated by birds. **H** 2-2.5m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.



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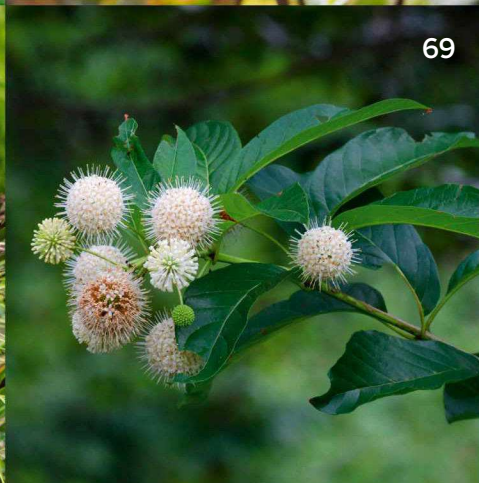
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**66 CAMASSIA CUSICKII 'ZWANENBURG'** Intense blue, starry flowers in May, perfect for planting in swathes and weaving through damp meadows or around water. Enjoys both sun and dappled shade, so a good way to connect spaces and add rhythm. **H** 60-70cm. **S** 10cm. **C** Moist but well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 6a-8b.

**67 CAMASSIA LEICHTLINII SUBSP. SUKSDORFII CAERULEA GROUP** One of the loveliest bulbs for wildflower meadows and prairie-style plantings. Its violet-blue spikes are magical on a cool, rainy morning. Bulks up nicely. **H** 1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Prefers a mesic-moist soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** April – May. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.



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**68 CAREX MUSKINGUMENSIS** A useful semi-evergreen grass for groundcover in light shade – either in small groups or in larger plantings. Very adaptable from winter wet to reasonably dry; also useful in semi-shaded rain gardens. Self-seeds in moister soils. Can be mowed in late winter. **H** 1m. **S** 1m. **C** Moist to mesic loam, clay; partial shade. **SI** May – October. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b.

**69 CEPHALANTHUS OCCIDENTALIS** An open-branched, deciduous shrub that's native to damp areas along rivers in North America. Useful in retention swales and rain gardens, but thrives in normal garden soils. Compensates for coming into leaf late with scented, creamy-white flowers. **H** 1.5-2m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist to wet; full sun. **SI** Late summer – autumn. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b. ▷

63 FAIZ BALAB / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 64 MAAYKE DE RIDDER; 65 NOVA PHOTOGRAPHIK / GAP PHOTOS; 67 JASON INGRAM; 68 VISIONS / GAP PHOTOS; 69 BRYAN REYNOLDS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO





*Camassia leichtlinii* subsp.  
*suksdorfii* Caerulea Group's  
violet-blue spikes are magical  
on a cool, rainy morning





75

▷ **70 EUTROCHIMUM PURPUREUM 'BABY JOE'**

This new, compact Joe-Pye weed is useful in smaller prairie plantings or borders. It starts to bloom in late July with terminal heads of pinkish-purple flowers. Native to moist prairie meadows, it adapts well to normal garden conditions. **H** 80cm-1m. **S** 60cm. **C** Mesic-moist, loam, clay; sun-part sun. **SI** Late July – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

**71 EUPHORBIA PALUSTRIS** This clump-forming, long-lived perennial produces flowers with clusters of vibrant yellow-lime bracts in May. The fresh-green leaves often turn intense orange-yellow in autumn. Found in moist meadows, it associates well with sanguisorbas, camassias and irises. AGM. **H** 1m. **S** 90cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; full sun. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-10b.

**72 HEMEROCALLIS CITRINA** This is my favourite daylily, which I prefer to use in lush naturalistic plantings together with *Lilium henryi*, aconitums and thalictrums. Forms large, bushy clumps with strap-like leaves to 80cm long. The nocturnal, fragrant and elegant, star-shaped flowers with lemon-yellow sepals are produced in abundance in midsummer. AGM. **H** 1.5m. **S** 1m. **C** Mesic-moist, loam, clay; sun-part sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.

**73 IRIS 'CAESAR'S BROTHER'** A really old cultivar but for me still the best for planting designs. It is super robust and has survived for decades in a moist, meadow-style planting at Hermannshof. The deep violet-blue flowers appear in mid-May well above the foliage, which turns a wonderful intense yellow in autumn. **H** 1-1.2m. **S** 80cm. **C** Mesic-moist, loam, clay; sun-part sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

**74 LEUCANTHEMELLA SEROTINA** A tall, robust, clump-forming perennial with toothed, dark-green leaves, which produces large, yellow-centred white daisies from September to October. It's native to moist, tall, herb communities, and works well planted alongside moor grasses, vernonias and *Iris sibirica*. AGM. **H** 1.8m. **S** 80cm. **C** Moist but well-drained clay, loam; full sun to light shade. **SI** Late summer – autumn. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**75 LEUCOJUM AESTIVUM 'GRAVETYE GIANT'**

The perfect bulb for a damp meadow garden in sun or dappled shade, where other bulbs wouldn't survive. Great together with ferns, such as *Matteuccia*. With glossy, strap-like, dark-green leaves, and leafless stems bearing up to eight bell-shaped, slightly fragrant, white flowers, tipped with green. AGM. **H** 60-80cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**76 LOBELIA X SPECIOSA 'HADSPEN PURPLE'**

This is a short-lived perennial but worth using as a vertical accent, scattered through meadow-style plantings, working especially well with *Sporobolus* or *Molinia* grasses. The fantastic, bright-purple flower racemes are attractive for



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a long time in summer. **H** 80cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Mesic-moist, loam, clay; full sun. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**77 LYTHRUM SALICARIA 'SWIRL'** Clump-forming perennial with strongly upright, branching stems to 1m tall, clad with narrow, lance-shaped leaves that turn red in autumn. Airy spikes of rich rosy-purple flowers are produced over a long period during summer. **H** 1m. **S** 40cm. **C** Moist, loam, clay; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

**78 MOLINIA CAERULEA SUBSP. ARUNDINACEA 'TRANSPARENT'** A deep-rooted, deciduous, cool-season grass for various conditions. Arching mounds of strap-like foliage. Transparent, airy spikelets with greenish-purple flowers emerge in late summer, turning yellow in November. Combines well with *Iris sibirica*, persicarias and sanguisorbas. **H** 1.8m. **S** 60cm. **C** Moist loam, clay; full sun to part shade. **SI** August – November. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

**79 SANGUISORBA OFFICINALIS 'ARNHEM'** A Piet Oudolf selection with tall, wiry, branched flower stalks, carrying deep rose-pink drumstick flowers in summer. This was one of the best in our trials; very floriferous and, unlike many other tall sanguisorbas, doesn't generally flop. Cut back after flowering to prevent seedlings. **H** 1.8m. **S** 50cm. **C** Mesic-moist, loam, clay; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**80 VIBURNUM NUDUM BRANDYWINE (= 'BULK')** One of my favourite viburnums for woodland-edge plantings. It's a medium-sized shrub with glossy leaves that turn wine-red in autumn. Large clusters of ornamental berries, which mature from pale-green through white, pink and blue to black, remain after the leaves have fallen. This cultivar is self-fertile. **H** 1.5-2m. **S** 1.5m. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** Late summer – autumn. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

## For pollinators

**81 ALLIUM 'MILLENNIUM'** A clump-forming and very robust summer-blooming *Allium angulosum* hybrid, with thick, narrow leaves and 5cm pompoms of deep purple-pink flowers in mid-to-late summer. Works well in dry, sunny, steppe plantings as well as in borders. A good source of nectar and pollen. **H** 40cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Well-drained loam, clay, sand; full sun. **SI** Late summer. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

**82 ALLIUM FLAVUM** A deciduous bulb with narrow, blue-green leaves that quickly wither away. Small, bell-shaped, yellow flowers are borne in loose umbels in summer. A delicate allium for dry spots in gravel gardens with low vegetation. Works well with *Stipa* grasses and mat-forming thymes. **AGM**. **H** 40cm **S** 3cm. **C** Poor, gravelly, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** July. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 3a-9b.

**83 ALLIUM SPHAEROCEPHALON** A native European allium that grows in dry meadows and rocky places, with a tuft of long, narrow basal leaves that emerge in autumn. Elegant, long-stalked, rounded heads of reddish flowers in summer that are great for pollinators. Most effective planted in groups of 15-20 among grasses. **AGM**. **H** 80cm. **S** 5cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** Midsummer. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

**84 BETONICA OFFICINALIS 'HUMMELO'** A valuable clump-forming perennial that produces dense, terminal spikes of deep purplish-pink flowers from mid-to-late summer. It's a selection of the late German nurseryman Ernst Pagels, who gave it this cultivar name not only because the seed originated in Piet Oudolf's garden, Hummelo, but also because it attracts so many bumblebees, which in German are called *hummel*. **AGM**. **H** 60-70cm. **S** 40cm. **C** Well-drained; full sun to part shade. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**85 CALAMINTHA NEPETA 'TRIUMPHATOR'** This sterile hybrid forms a low bush with shiny, highly aromatic leaves. It is profusely covered with clouds of small, white flowers in late summer. One of the most important companion plants for dry steppe gardens. Bees love it. **H** 40cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Well-drained, dry soil; full sun. **SI** August – September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-7b.

**86 CISTUS CRETICUS** An evergreen Mediterranean sub-shrub for hot, summer-dry spots in mild climates. Works well in garrigue-like plantings or gravel gardens together with lavenders, rosemary and euphorbias. Large magenta-pink flowers, with crinkled sepals and yellow stamens, open every day in early summer. A rich source of pollen for bees. **H** 80cm-1.3m. **S** 80cm. **C** Poor, gravelly, well-drained soil; full sun, sheltered. **SI** May – June. **HR** RHS H4, USDA 7a-11.

**87 CROCUS TOMMASINIANUS** The best crocus for naturalising in semi-shaded plantings or under tall, late-emerging perennials. Spreads by runners and by self-seeding, building up impressive carpets of lilac-pink, long-tubed flowers that are one of the earliest food sources for pollinators. The grass-like leaves can help to suppress weeds. **AGM**. **H** 5cm. **S** 2cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil; full sun-part shade. **SI** Early spring. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

**88 ECHINOPS SPHAEROCEPHALUS 'ARCTIC GLOW'** A vigorous perennial with sturdy, red-tinged stems and deeply divided, spiny leaves. The globose, white flowerheads are borne in mid and late summer. I love to combine it with the soft texture of bronze fennel. Extremely attractive to bees, it works best in a hot position with full sun. **H** 90cm-1.3m. **S** 40cm. **C** Well-drained chalk, loam, sand; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 3a-10b.

**89 ERYNGIUM BOURGATII** A very spiny umbellifer that attracts a variety of insects. A perfect plant for dry, hot spots in gravel gardens or low steppe ▷







90

▷ plantings. Attractive silver-veined leaves, and vivid blue, branched stems, bearing cone-like flowerheads with spiny, silvery-blue to violet bracts. **H** 40-50cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Poor, well-drained, gravelly soil; full sun. **SI** July – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**90 EUPHORBIA SEGUIERIANA SUBSP.**

**NICICIANA** A lovely textural euphorbia, forming attractive semi-round bushes. Combines well with salvias, lavenders and eryngiums. Stems are tinged red with fine, needle-like leaves and an abundance of tiny acid-lime flowers. **H** 60cm. **S** 70cm. **C** Light, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-10a.



95

**91 FOENICULUM VULGARE 'SMOKY'** An improved, darker seed strain of *F. vulgare* 'Purpureum', with finely divided foliage that is a particularly deep purple when young, but holds its dark colouration well into summer. Flat umbels of tiny yellow flowers appear in summer. Stunning together with spiny or grey-leaved plants such as echinops or artichokes. **H** 1.6-1.8m. **S** 50cm. **C** Moist but well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 4a-9b.

**92 HIPPOCREPIS EMERUS** An elegant, deciduous shrub with bright-green, pinnate foliage, which grows in the partial shade of open oak forests in the Mediterranean. Pale-yellow, pea-like flowers appear in small clusters from late spring to autumn. Much loved by bumblebees. **H** 1.5-2m. **S** 1m. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun to light shade, sheltered. **SI** April – June. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



96

**93 KNAUTIA MACEDONICA** A wonderful short-lived self-seeder for any naturalistic, dry-habitat planting with a steppe-like appeal. A succession of deep-crimson, pincushion-like flowerheads from early to late summer provide an important pollen source for rare wild bees that prefer the scabious relatives. **H** 1.6-90cm. **S** 30cm. **C** Moderately fertile, well-drained, alkaline soil; full sun. **SI** June – August. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

**94 LAVANDULA X INTERMEDIA 'IMPRESS PURPLE'** My favourite lavender, with a great profusion of the darkest blue-purple flowers, held on long spikes in midsummer. A favourite of bees, with a very late and long flowering period. Forms a neat, bushy, evergreen shrub with grey-green foliage. Wonderful with acid-yellow euphorbias. **H** 60cm. **S** 60cm. **C** Poor, gravelly, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

**95 MUSCARI LATIFOLIUM** A deciduous, broad-leaved grape hyacinth with dense racemes of deep blue-black flowers in spring, topped by a crown of pale-violet, sterile flowers. Most effective in larger quantities scattered through a drought-tolerant planting of silvery perennials. A good self-seeder. AGM. **H** 20cm. **S** 5cm. **C** Moderately fertile, well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** April – May. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.



100

**96 ORIGANUM LAEVIGATUM 'HERRENHAUSEN'**

A woody-based perennial ideal for steppe and gravel gardens. It forms a loose clump of wiry stems with small, ovate, purple-flushed leaves and heads of tubular pink flowers with deep-purple bracts. Loved by wild bees. AGM. **H** 45cm. **S** 35cm. **C** Poor to moderately fertile, well-drained, alkaline soil; dislikes winter wet; full sun. **SI** July – September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

**97 PEUCEDANUM OFFICINALE** My favourite umbellifer, with beautiful, finely pinnate leaves. After some years, it bears tall stems with umbels of yellow flowers that are visited by numerous insects. A slow grower that needs some years to show its full potential. Beautiful as an accent in dry plantings when emerging out of a low matrix of seslerias. **H** 50cm (foliage), 1.6m (in flower). **S** 50cm. **C** Moderately fertile, dry-moist, well-drained, alkaline soil; full sun to part shade. **SI** August – September. **HR** RHS H6, USDA 5a-9a.

**98 SALVIA NEMOROSA 'CARADONNA'**

Probably the most valuable sage for dry borders and naturalistic steppe plantings. Dark purple-tinged stems and upright racemes of deep violet-purple flowers perform well over a long period from midsummer. Cut back to the ground after flowering. **H** 50cm. **S** 35cm. **C** Well-drained, alkaline soil (dislikes winter wet); full sun. **SI** June – September. **HR** RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

**99 SALVIA SCLAREA VAR. TURKESTANIANA**

An impressive sage with large leaves and intense purple-tinged bracts. The pale-lilac flowers are a favourite of the large blue carpenter bee. A short-lived species that works well as a self-seeding filler plant in any dry, naturalistic planting with some open ground or a gravel mulch cover. **H** 80cm-1.1m. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained soil; full sun. **SI** June – July. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

**100 SALVIA VERTICILLATA 'PURPLE RAIN'**

An improved selection of this robust and easy-to-grow sage species, with purple, flowers, borne in long, dense, interrupted spikes on often reddish stems in summer. Not always very long-lived, it self-seeds freely in gaps of steppe-like plantings. Works well grown alongside moonshine-yellow achilleas. **H** 70cm. **S** 50cm. **C** Well-drained, alkaline soil; full sun. **SI** June – August. **HR** RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b. □

**USEFUL INFORMATION**

Cassian Schmidt is a landscape designer, plantsman, author, professor and lecturer, and one of the foremost practitioners of the New German Style. He is currently director of Hermannshof, a botanical trial garden in Weinheim, Germany, known for its habitat-based approach to planting design.

**Address** Hermannshof, Babostraße 5, 69469 Weinheim, Germany. **Tel** +49 (0)6201 13652.

**Open** Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm (November to February), daily, 10am-6pm (March and October), and daily, 10am-7pm (April to September).

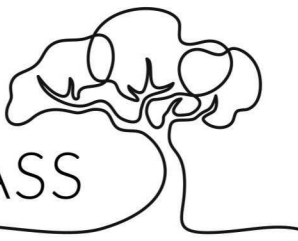




*Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna'  
is probably the most valuable  
sage for dry borders and  
naturalistic steppe plantings



# GARDEN MASTERCLASS



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## Events for 2023

Live events this year will include: Dan Pearson, Troy Scott-Smith, Jason Ingram, Sarah Eberle, Annie Guilfoyle, Carolien Barkman, Jo McKerr, Marina Christopher, Noel Kingsbury, Tom Stuart-Smith, Richard Scott, Katy Merrington and James Hitchmough - this list is constantly updated with new events. In addition we have a webinar programme, with a rich and varied range of topics - please check our Diary Page for all the latest events.

All dates and information are correct at time of going to press.

Please check our website for all up to date information and events or contact us by email:

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GARDENING TALENT

## ELLIOTT BEVERIDGE

As estate manager and head gardener at a historically important private estate, Elliott gardens with both heritage and legacy in mind

PORTRAIT JUSTIN FOULKES

**Earliest garden memory** I remember my parents' pretty basic attempt at growing vegetables. I think it only lasted a season, but at the age of seven or eight, I was fascinated to discover that we could grow our own food and particularly excited by the meagre crop of carrots.

**Horticultural heroes** Plantswoman Beth Chatto and head gardeners Fergus Garrett and Tom Coward are all huge inspirations to me. I admire Fergus and Tom for their passion and commitment to projects at a single location, something I've tried to emulate in my own career. And Beth's mantra, 'right plant, right place', constantly resonates with me.

**Favourite landscape and garden that has influenced you** Stourhead, Gravetye Manor, Oudolf Field at Hauser & Wirth, Somerset, and Great Dixter all spring to mind. I have also spent time on the northwest coast of Ireland in Co Donegal. The empty beaches, endless sand dunes and huge array of wild flora on offer always blows me away, as does the wind.

**Three worthwhile tips** Don't worry about things not working; trial and error is key to learning. Make lots of notes. I'm constantly jotting things down when I do things – what works, what doesn't, and so on. And don't always follow the rules; try different things – you might find that something works when you never expected it to.

**Favourite 'weed' you're happy to have in your garden** I'm a huge fan of teasel: great structure, long season of interest and great for the birds in late autumn and winter.

**Favourite planting style** I do like prairie-style planting but equally love a shaded woodland understorey. Opening up long overgrown sections on the wider estate at Beaverbrook, where I used to work, led me to discover just how quickly plants that had been lost to an area can quickly re-establish given the right conditions.

**In what direction do you see horticulture heading in the next few years?** I've been lucky enough to work with a great cross-section of people during my career, but the wider world of horticulture is still very male dominated. I see a slow change in this, but feel that there should be more female head gardeners than there are at present.

**Your gardening legacy** The planting of 10,000-plus native, deciduous whips in the Surrey Hills. I know that I will never see them at their best, but knowing that in 80-100 years there could be swathes of woodland that I sourced and planted is a very satisfying legacy to be able to leave.

**Email** Ebeveridge1@gmail.com **Instagram** Dinder\_gardener



Knowing that in 80-100 years there could be swathes of woodland that I sourced and planted is a very satisfying legacy



A full-page photograph of a garden pond at sunset. The sun is low in the sky, creating a bright, golden glow that filters through the trees in the background. The light reflects on the water's surface. A small, light blue wooden boat is moored in the middle of the pond. The pond is surrounded by lush greenery, including large-leafed plants and tall, spiky purple flowers in the foreground. The overall mood is peaceful and nostalgic.

# Ahead of her time

Beth Chatto, the late, pioneering plantswoman who convinced us to find the right plant for the right place, would have been 100 this year. Here, those who were influenced by her reflect on her lasting legacy

WORDS CATHERINE HORWOOD PHOTOGRAPHS RICHARD BLOOM





## The Water Garden

Beth transformed a boggy hollow into this beautiful, calming space by digging out four ponds, inspired by the shape of a cloud formation. As well as those tranquil pools, the Water Garden features streams and bridges, and water-loving planting including waterlilies and gunnera, ferns, marsh marigolds and candelabra primulas. A path beneath the boundary-hugging oak trees is lined with interesting shade-tolerant plants, and is the perfect spot to watch the ducks swim by.

**A**mong gardeners, there was, and is, only one Beth. Over her long life, Beth Chatto achieved the highest accolades in horticulture and beyond, including ten successive Chelsea Gold medals and an OBE. She wrote a string of best-selling books based on her experience of growing at her famous garden, and opened the first nursery to offer plants for specific conditions.

This year marks the centenary of her birth in what she called ‘the sticks of Essex’. But it was her garden at Elmstead Market, near Colchester, especially her experimental Gravel Garden, that brought her international acclaim. It’s a beautifully planted space that James Hitchmough, emeritus professor of Horticultural Ecology at the University of Sheffield, has described as “perhaps the most original British garden creation of the 20th century”. As the fame of her garden and nursery grew, so did the team around her. Beth inspired enormous loyalty and staff stayed for decades. But there was also a constant stream of international horticultural students starting out in their careers, eager to spend time learning from Beth.

Bernard Trainor, famous for his landscape designs along the west coast of California, came as an intern in 1989. “For me, Beth was the English voice of regionally appropriate design,” he says. “Her starting point was always to choose the plants that will thrive in your own garden’s particular context. Years after working with her, I have come to realise her gift to me was learning from her relentless work ethic, and her generosity to me as a mentor. Her influence has and will always be present in my gardens.”

Peter Janke, who, like Beth, came to gardening via floristry, came for a week’s trial in 2003 and ended up staying for months, returning regularly over the years as he built his garden design business near Dusseldorf. “Beth showed me how to solve a gardening oxymoron: all-year-round attractive garden design versus sensible eco-conscious gardening. All her gardening attitudes have been wise, constructive and beautiful – her life-long work is still trendsetting.”

Yuko Tanabe Nagamura, landscape designer and project head gardener at the Piet Oudolf Garden in Tokyo, first met Beth on ►



RACHEL WARNE

**“Her starting point was always to choose the plants that will thrive in your own garden’s particular context”**

BERNARD TRAINOR





▷ a visit to the gardens in 1995, and was so inspired that she moved to the UK to study with Beth at Elmstead Market. “The global climate changes prove her provision is right. I am now practising and promoting more sustainable yet visually pleasing planting in Japan with its different climate zones. My challenge is to reach the stage where Beth used to say, ‘the garden is where art meets science’, plants looking effortlessly harmonious as if ‘singing to the wind.’”

Doug Hoerr of Chicago-based Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects spent part of a sabbatical year at the gardens in the 1980s. “Beth had a huge influence on how I choose and compose plants in a naturalistic manner,” he says. “More importantly, she gave me the gift of learning to read a site, respect and accept the influences of its context, and identify microclimates. I learned to embrace the varying conditions – not fight them or attempt to bend them to my will, but rather, to choose and design from a plant palette that, by native origin, is well suited to the specific conditions.”

Garden designer Dan Pearson was captivated by Beth’s Chelsea Flower Show exhibits in the 1970s. “As a teenager, they made me feel like I’d found my horticultural mentor,” he says. “With her impeccable eye for a good plant, and ability to combine them so they made sense, she was a natural educator. I still refer to her catalogues and books for her wisdom and sensibility as a gardener and nurserywoman. She became a friend over the years, and we bonded over plants and the world around them.”

While curator at RHS Garden Hyde Hall, designer Matthew Wilson also got to know Beth. “Her impact on my career in horticulture was profound and enduring,” he says. “She helped me connect the dots between my childhood love of nature and wildlife and working life in gardening, and her enthusiasm and generosity in sharing knowledge was extraordinary.”

Beth died in 2018, aged 94, but five years on, the gardens continue to develop. “Beth always said that gardens are not like ▷



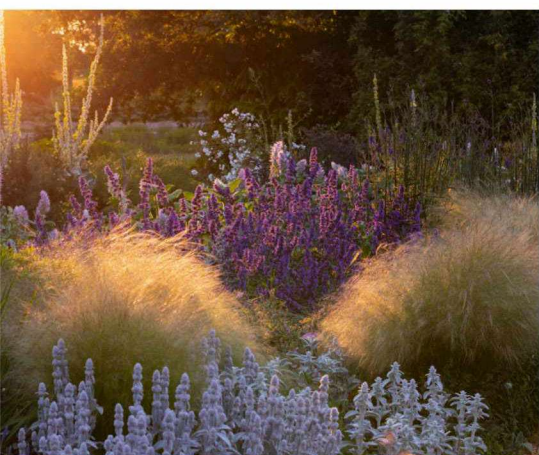
**“The global climate changes prove her provision is right. I am now practising and promoting more sustainable yet visually pleasing planting in Japan”**

YUKO TANABE NAGAMURA



# The Gravel Garden

This most famous area of Beth's garden was created in the 1990s on the half-acre site of the nursery's former car park. It was inspired by a dried-up river bed she saw in New Zealand, and a visit to Dungeness, where by chance she met Derek Jarman and saw his garden at Prospect Cottage. The drought-tolerant planting may look like it's growing directly out of the gravel, but it is, in fact, planted into the soil underneath. Beth dug over the compacted ground before adding compost to enrich the soil, and topped it off with a 4cm-deep mulch of sand and gravel. She was not trying to imitate a natural plant community or landscape, but creating a beautiful, low-input garden that would thrive year-round in the challenging Essex climate and conditions.







## The Reservoir Garden

The Reservoir Garden, further along from the Water Garden, was redesigned a few years ago by the garden team. It features naturalistic planting in Beth's style, with masses of colourful bulbs early in the year in spring and early summer, followed by tall, late-season perennials and grasses that hit their peak in late summer and autumn, and are left up over winter.



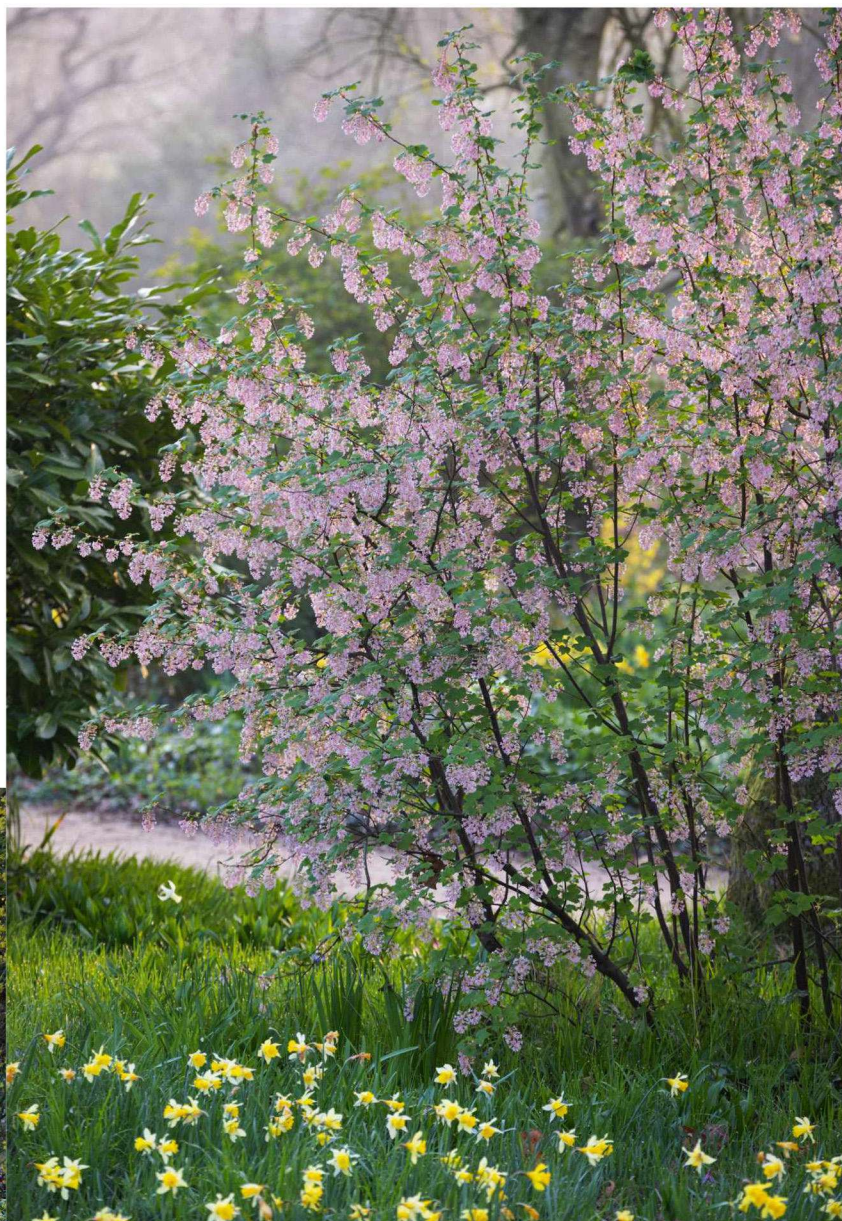
**“With her impeccable eye for a good plant, and ability to combine them so they made sense, she was a natural educator”**

DAN PEARSON



# The Woodland Garden

Parts of the gardens were badly affected by the Great Storm of October 1987, but this gave Beth the opportunity to start over in this area and create the Woodland Garden. Beneath the shade cast by a copse of oak trees, there are swathes of spring bulbs, such as snowdrops, hellebores and daffodils, as well as rarer treasures including trilliums and erythroniums. Her experience of developing the Woodland Garden led to Beth writing her lauded book, *The Shade Garden*.



▷ a picture you hang on the wall,” says the gardens’ head gardener Åsa Gregers-Warg, “They’ll continue to change and evolve over time. I’ve never felt tied to keeping the garden as some kind of museum. Beth was concerned about climate change, its global effects and how we use our precious natural resources. Her ethos and philosophy continue to inform and inspire the way we garden here.”

In 2015, Beth set up the Beth Chatto Education Trust to bring her ecological approach to new generations. As her granddaughter, Julia Boulton, who has run the gardens and nursery since 2012, puts it: “She had the foresight to pioneer sustainable gardening – needed now more than ever – and continues to inspire.” □

## USEFUL INFORMATION

**Address** Beth Chatto’s Plants and Gardens, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Colchester, Essex, CO7 7DB

**Tel** 01206 822007. **Web** [bethchatto.co.uk](http://bethchatto.co.uk) **Open** From 19 January – 28 February, Thursday to Saturday, 10am-4pm. See website for future opening times, and events to celebrate Beth’s centenary.



Head to our website to learn more about Beth Chatto’s life and career, and read our 1997 interview with her at [gardensillustrated.com/bethchatto](http://gardensillustrated.com/bethchatto)





# ALTERNATIVES TO BUXUS

*The unfortunate explosion of box blight and box moth caterpillar has made gardeners pause for thought, but a trial of clippable alternatives at RHS Garden Wisley has opened the eyes of its curator Matthew Pottage to a range of other evergreens*

WORDS MATTHEW POTTAGE PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

***Corokia x virgata***  
**'Frosted Chocolate'**

A beautiful cultivar, with frosty-looking, bronze leaves that are at their best in cold weather. Small, yellow flowers in early summer can be followed by small, orange berries. Needs fertile soil and two clips each summer to maintain a tight appearance. 1.5m x 1.5m. RHS H4†.





### PLANT PROFILE

**What** Evergreen shrubs and conifers with mostly small leaves and a compact habit (when clipped) with potential to form hedges and topiary shapes, without crippling pest and disease associations.

**Origins** Many of the shrubs featured, which were trialled at RHS Garden Wisley, are native to New Zealand, and have typically small leaves.

**Season** Year-round interest, though colourful juvenile foliage during the growing season adds extra appeal to some cultivars, while others take on a new foliage colour during colder months.

**Conditions** Generally full sun in well-drained soil, although podocarpus and rhododendron will tolerate partial shade.

**Hardiness** Mostly hardy in the UK, but pittosporum will suffer below -10°C.

\*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

†Hardiness ratings given where available.

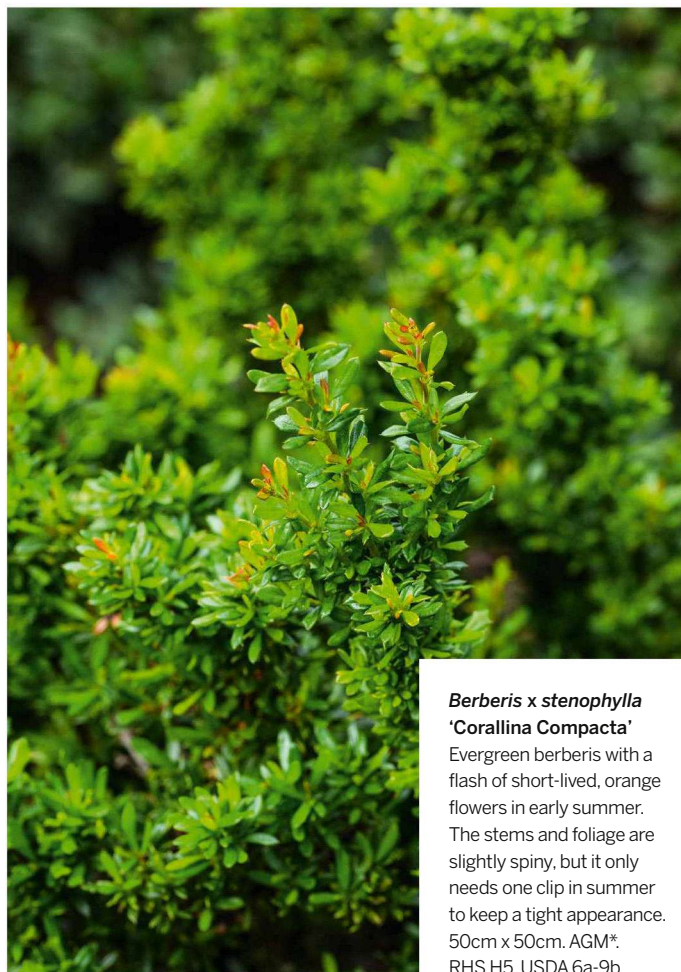




*Pittosporum tenuifolium*  
**'Oliver Twist'**

One of the best cultivars for small foliage, 'Oliver Twist' has a delicate, yellow variegation to the leaf that is less obvious in the fresh new growth. The slender, black stems are easy to clip. Requires fertile soil and three clips each summer to maintain a tight appearance. 4m x 2.5m. RHS H4.





***Berberis x stenophylla*  
'Corallina Compacta'**

Evergreen berberis with a flash of short-lived, orange flowers in early summer. The stems and foliage are slightly spiny, but it only needs one clip in summer to keep a tight appearance. 50cm x 50cm. AGM\*. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



***Rhododendron Bloombux*  
(= 'Microhirs3')**

A relative newcomer, with attractive, dark-green foliage and pale-pink flowers in early summer. Requires fertile soil and two clips in summer to maintain a tight appearance. 1m x 1m. RHS H5.

**B**ox blight began ravaging the box hedges at RHS Garden Wisley from around 2006, and we began to tackle it through careful pruning, with some spraying. It felt arduous, and the results were not always completely satisfactory. It felt wrong and too shocking to strip the garden of its small hedges, and so we limped on. Then, the box tree moth arrived in noticeable numbers in the garden from around 2014, and the speed of defoliation from the feeding caterpillars was astounding. At the RHS, we were inundated with members asking what they could do to save their box. We found ourselves at a crossroads. Both the blight and the caterpillar became established in southeast England and have spread in all directions ever since. It was evident there was no panacea that we could rush out and buy, and it seemed we needed more sensible alternatives than spraying or picking off caterpillars.

The much-discussed *Ilex crenata* seemed to be the solution to everyone's gardening prayers. But in the Wisley climate (hot and dry in the summer, on sandy soil) it appeared to die slowly, going uncontrollably yellow across its foliage.

I felt we needed to start looking at the 'clippability' as I called it, of other small-leaved shrubs and conifers. Box had always taken close clipping, seemingly completely tolerant to it. What else could manage such treatment? The Wisley team

came up with a wonderful design to carry out an informal trial in the Walled Garden East, where small hedges, pyramids and taller hedges could be made up of different genera and cultivars, with the understanding that as time progressed, we would start to see results that we could share with members and visitors. It was also an opportunity to explore cultivars of a compact or slower-growing nature. For example, yew (*Taxus baccata*) is known for its tolerance of close clipping, though clip it at the tiny proportions that box can withstand, and it can protest in the growing season, throwing up vertical leading shoots, which is somewhat to be expected given that yew is naturally a medium-sized tree. By contrast, the 'old school' yew cultivar *Taxus baccata* 'Repandens' is less vigorous and tends to grow more prostrate, and takes to close clipping on a small scale beautifully well. Given that we had confidence it would be reliable, we used it to hedge the entire display.

The two main considerations that have become very apparent are the plants' ability to cope with close clipping and their levels of vigour.

Those wanting a crisp finish, for example, will find a plant needing three clips a year rather tiresome. Some of the early inclusions have been edited out; the wonderful *Ugni molinae* 'Butterball' was too tender for the cold frost pocket that is Wisley, and some of the small-leaved ceanothus couldn't cope with the level of clipping forced upon them. I imagined the Wisley conditions would be far too hot

To continue turn to page 55 ►

We needed to  
start looking at the  
'clippability' of other  
small-leaved shrubs  
and conifers





***Taxus baccata* 'Repandens'**

An old cultivar, sometimes seen in old rock gardens where plants are wider than tall. Tolerant of both sun and shade. It is usefully not too vigorous but takes a few years to fully 'fill out' given its slow-growing nature. Only requires one clip a year to maintain a tight appearance. 50cm x 4m. AGM. RHS H7.





***Corokia x virgata*  
'Silver Ghost'**

A cultivar that's a personal favourite, with dense, tangled, almost zig-zag-like, black stems with silvery-grey leaves. Best in full sun and tolerant of maritime exposure. Requires two clips a year to maintain a tight appearance. 2m x 1m.



***Podocarpus nivalis***

A versatile and reliable conifer that has similar red fruits to yew. Can be readily grown from semi-ripe cuttings, and its plain green foliage is a great foil for other plants. Only requires one clip a year to maintain a tight appearance. 2.5m x 2.5m. RHS H5.

## How to manage blight and caterpillars, and grow alternatives

• **Box blight flourishes in damp and humid conditions** where good air flow is restricted. It is therefore no surprise that it ran wild through old hedges where decades of clipping at the same height made incredibly dense plants. Furthermore, our love of summer-flowering herbaceous plants spilling over formal box hedges helped compound the issue. Tell-tale signs were the yellowing and death of the foliage, then the stem tips, which spread across the plant. Yet blight feels somewhat tame in comparison to the damage caused by the caterpillar of the box tree moth, which feeds at such speed that whole box balls have been defoliated in 48 hours.

• **The caterpillar is large and quite easy to spot**, not dissimilar to the cabbage white caterpillar. In my own west London garden, I fought tirelessly to keep my two variegated box cones, which worked

perfectly in a pair of French urns, but sadly I turned my head for too long, and both got stripped of leaves. While it is unusual for either the blight or caterpillar to kill a box plant outright, they do, of course, weaken it through repeated attack, as the plant loses its ability to photosynthesise.

Management options, including growth invigorators, are available for both issues, and for those with the time, motivation and budget for extra measures, clipped box can be retained. And, happily for some, gardens in many parts of the country have not been affected by blight.

• **Many of the alternative plants discussed here will be familiar** to gardeners, and few require special or unusual treatment. The greatest challenge is finding plants in sufficient quantity. It is fair to say that evergreen shrubs have been out of fashion for some years, and

many retailers do not hold large stocks of small-leaved podocarps. Thankfully, many genera, such as *Corokia*, *Pittosporum*, *Podocarpus* and *Taxus*, are easy to multiply at home by semi-ripe cuttings.

• **Planting guidance is the same as for any standard shrub or tree:** plant in autumn when the ground is warm, with some moisture, and keep plants watered during dry periods for the first two summers. Clipping in late summer can commence as soon as the plants reach the desired size and shape, with up to two or three clips depending on the quality of the soil, which is the determining factor for the rate at which many shrubs grow. Pinching out the growing points encourages plants to branch and creates better hedges or topiary shapes.



Find out more about how to combat box moth caterpillar at [gardensillustrated.com/boxmoth](https://gardensillustrated.com/boxmoth)





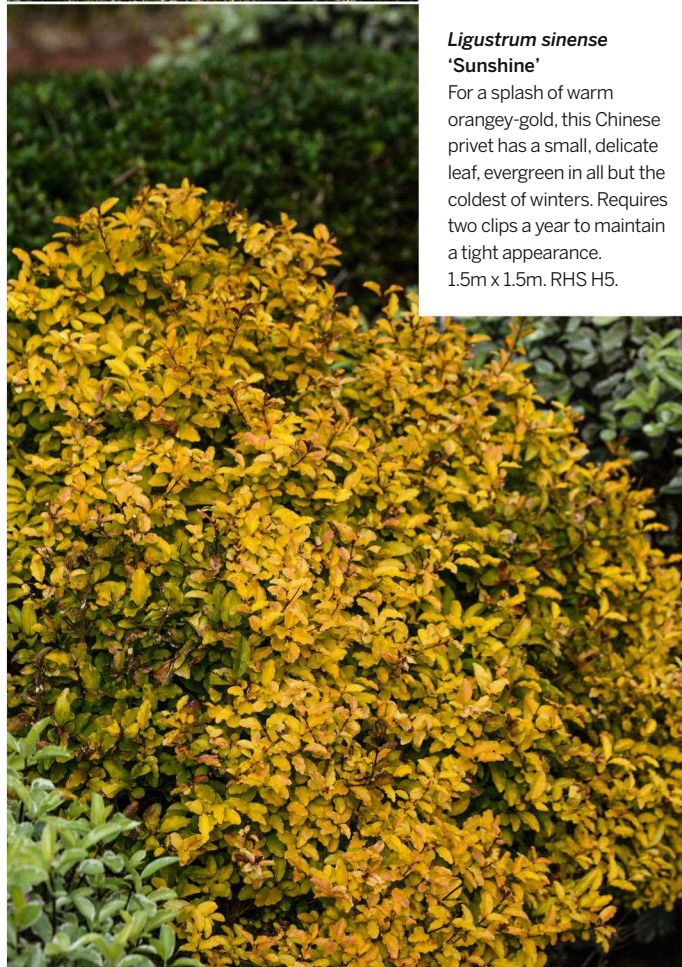
***Podocarpus*  
'Chocolate Box'**

Similar to *Podocarpus nivalis* except the foliage is a darker green in summer, flushing a deep chocolate bronze during the colder months. Requires one clip a year to maintain a tight appearance. 2.5m x 2.5m.



***Cotoneaster conspicuus*  
'Decorus'**

Can easily be cut back into old wood where it will duly regenerate. White flowers attract pollinators in spring; red fruits follow in autumn. Requires two clips a year to maintain a tight appearance. 2.5m x 4m. AGM. RHS H6.



***Ligustrum sinense*  
'Sunshine'**

For a splash of warm orangey-gold, this Chinese privet has a small, delicate leaf, evergreen in all but the coldest of winters. Requires two clips a year to maintain a tight appearance. 1.5m x 1.5m. RHS H5.



***Taxus baccata* 'Renke's  
Kleiner Grüner'**

A new introduction from a chance seedling, this dense, feathery, dwarf yew is a good stand-in for box. The tips of the new growth have a coppery tone. Needs one clip a year to maintain a tight appearance. 2.5m x 2.5m.





***Phillyrea latifolia*  
'Les Barres'**

*Phillyrea* make wonderful, versatile garden plants and this cultivar has attractive, rounded, deep-green, glossy leaves. Best grown in full sun with good drainage. Requires two clips a year to maintain a tight appearance. 8m x 8m.



***Podocarpus totara*  
'Aureus'**

Similar to *P. nivalis* but with larger leaves and a more open habit that becomes denser with repeat clipping. Flushes mustard-yellow in the colder months. Requires one clip a year to maintain a tight appearance. 12m x 4m. RHS H5.

▷ and dry for success with *Rhododendron* Bloombux (= 'Microhirs3'), but it has gone on to triumph. Other shrubs simply had too much stamina, the most unsuited being *Elaeagnus x submacrophylla* 'Compacta', which managed to throw out extension shoots some 30-60cm high just a fortnight after clipping.

Of course, a range of alternatives brings about different colours, textures and forms; a fascinating debate then ensues – is it really a box alternative if it doesn't look the same as box? But in a gloomy, north-facing garden, surely trading dull, green box for something with a white, variegated leaf is positive? I've seen spheres of the white-speckled *Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Irene Paterson' used to great effect in a small London garden with an emphasis on blues and silvers. They replaced ravaged box balls and the change is one for the better. *Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Oliver Twist' is another option to consider for this sort of effect. Perhaps the long-held snobbery around plants with coloured and variegated leaves will start to subside if their qualities for other garden uses come into play.

For the purist wishing to replace the box-like, matt-green, small leaves with similar, the superb *Podocarpus nivalis* could well save the day. It isn't too fast growing, is easy to propagate, and can regenerate from old wood. It can also cope with full sun to part shade. As a fan of coloured foliage, I also enjoy some of the podocarp cultivars, such

## Perhaps the snobbery around plants with variegated leaves will subside if their other uses come into play

as *Podocarpus* 'Chocolate Box', which flushes a magnificent bronze in autumn.

If you are wondering whether Wisley is now bare of box, we have one survivor, and that is *Buxus sempervirens* 'Bowles's Blue'; its larger, slightly puckered, tough, glaucous leaves appear to be making a last stand against both the blight and the caterpillar. It doesn't clip to a tight hedge, but it is the only box hedge we now showcase. □

Matthew Pottage is curator at RHS Garden Wisley.

### Where to see and buy

The plants mentioned here can all be seen at RHS Garden Wisley, specifically in the Walled Garden East.

• **RHS Garden Wisley** Wisley Lane, Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB.

Tel 01483 224234, [rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley](https://rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley)

Many of these plants can be found in garden centres and nurseries that offer a comprehensive range of shrubs. My favourite box alternative, *Podocarpus nivalis*, and some of its cultivars, also has several online suppliers. Good nurseries to try include:

• **Burncoose Nurseries** Gwennap, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ.

Tel 01209 860316, [burncoose.co.uk](https://burncoose.co.uk)

• **Larch Cottage Nursery** Melkintorpe, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2DR.  
Tel 01931 712404, [larchcottage.co.uk](https://larchcottage.co.uk)





## IN BRIEF

**Name** El Jaral de La Mira.

**What** An exclusive event

venue with gardens set

within a biodynamic farm.

**Where** Central Spain.

**Soil** Well-drained, poor soil.

**Size** Roughly five acres.

**Climate** Warm continental with  
low rainfall. Hot dry summers and  
cool winters with frequent frosts.

**Hardiness zone** USDA 9.

At El Jaral de La Mira near Madrid, designer Álvaro Sampedro has created an atmospheric garden for all seasons. Soft mounds of grasses, including *Miscanthus sinensis*, and resilient, drought-resistant shrubs, such as *Escallonia* 'Iveyi', mirror the contours of the surrounding forest and offer a contrast to the vertical accents of a multi-stemmed *Arbutus unedo* and iconic Italian cypresses.



# A stylish marriage

Weaving together elements of the site's past and present, designer Álvaro Sampedro has created a rich tapestry of planting for a lauded chef's wedding venue garden

WORDS HANNAH GARDNER PHOTOGRAPHS RICHARD BLOOM







**M**arauding cattle and pesky, foraging pigs are very much part of the narrative at El Jiral de la Mira, a wedding and events venue northwest of Madrid that stands out for its excellent restaurant and exuberant gardens.

It's the vision of the celebrated Spanish chef Mario Sandoval, whose commitment to food sustainability is central to the venue's core values. His much-lauded restaurant is housed in former farm buildings, restored by architects Foxium Arquitectura, and much of the estate is given over to a biodynamic farm. But at its centre is an atmospheric garden, the work of Madrid-based designer Álvaro Sampedro, who loved the idea of a garden with a commitment to food sustainability and environmental protection at its heart, even if that did mean accommodating hungry cattle.

On his first visit to the site, Álvaro was delighted to discover an old mill and dairy, both littered with old tools and bits of machinery, some of which he has creatively reconfigured as water spouts for a series of garden fountains. It's a way of linking the

authenticity of the area's agricultural past with its revitalised productive present.

The area's royal past – in the 16th century it was a hunting ground of Philip II – is also referenced in the geometrical layout of the central area in front of the restaurant. Here, a series of interconnected terraces is a nod to the nearby Monasterio del Escorial, a former royal residence built in Spain's geometric Herreriano style of architecture, popular in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

Despite this geometric allusion to the past, the garden still feels contemporary and relaxed thanks to Álvaro's clever planting and considered use of space. A long gravel driveway with graceful, sinuous curves allows brides to make a grand entrance, and builds a sense of anticipation as you gradually discover the garden. It leads you past a distinctive rectangular fountain Álvaro has built into a terrace wall, before a trail of dark *Cupressus sempervirens* Stricta Group obelisks guide you through lavish planting to the elegant terraces.

These spacious terraces are shaded by symmetrical grids of trees, including the fast-growing *Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Shady Lady', *Arbutus unedo* and *Acer x freemanii*, a natural hybrid that combines fiery autumn colour

To continue turn to page 62 ►

**Above** Stately granite steps cut through a wide border featuring striking clumps of grasses, including the silky *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Graziella'. These steps lead up from the lower terrace to a romantic pergola walkway, covered in fragrant star jasmine and a white rambling rose, which guides guests to the central outdoor bar.

**Right** Plumes of *Stipa tenuissima* and *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' combined with the bright-pink flowers of native *Valeriana rubra* create a link to *Miscanthus sinensis* and pink muhly grass, *Muhlenbergia capillaris* on the other side of the terrace wall. A neat hedge of *Laurus nobilis* frames a series of woven planters filled with herbs, beside the restaurant and an old, cylindrical well. As well as introducing new trees to these terraces, Álvaro has also integrated several existing trees, including ancient *Quercus ilex*, which not only offer shade from the scorching summer sun, but also give a sense of scale and create rich colour blocks during autumn, as well as connecting the garden to the surrounding forests.



The garden feels contemporary  
and relaxed thanks to  
Álvaro's clever planting and  
considered use of space





## Seasonal shift

For a garden that has to delight guests throughout the year, an evolving colour palette is key. Álvaro thinks of his palette as “a recipe balancing colour, texture and season”. The spring palette is cool, with drifts of silvery foliage and bold swathes of deep purple *Salvia nemorosa* ‘Caradonna’. Soft clouds of aromatic *Calamintha nepeta* contrast with the zingy bold blooms of the architectural Mediterranean spurge *Euphorbia characias*. As summer progresses, deep pinks and blue hues pick up the tempo. The rich colour palette of floriferous red valerian and blue flower spikes of Russian sage work well

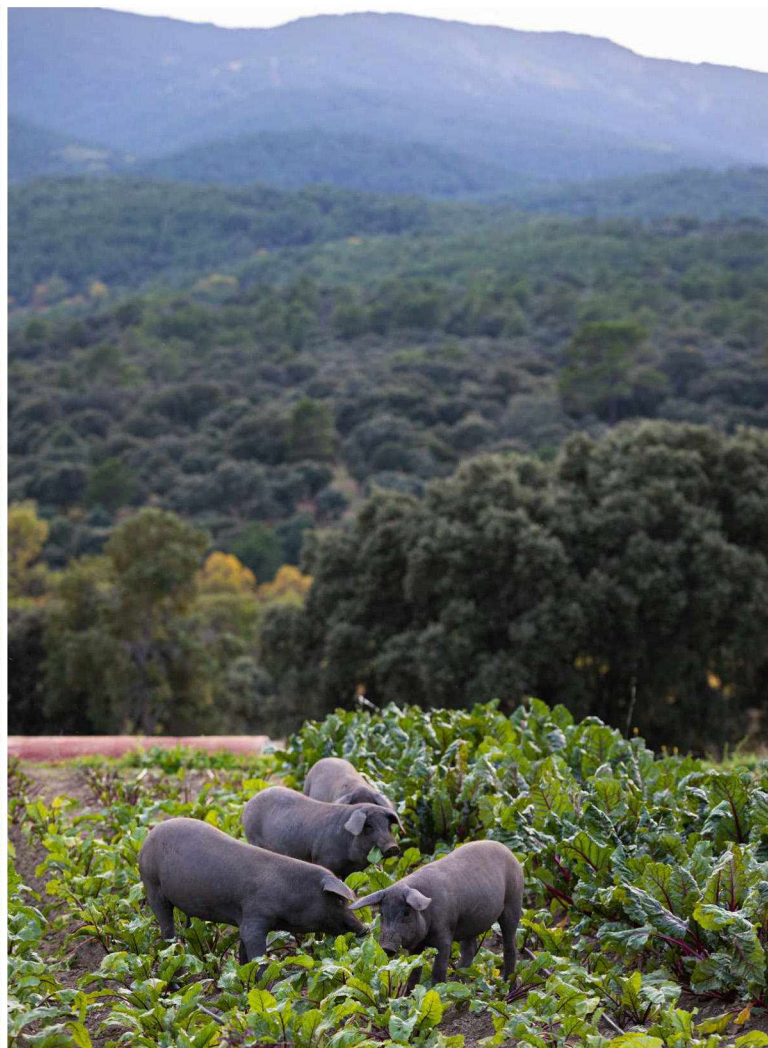
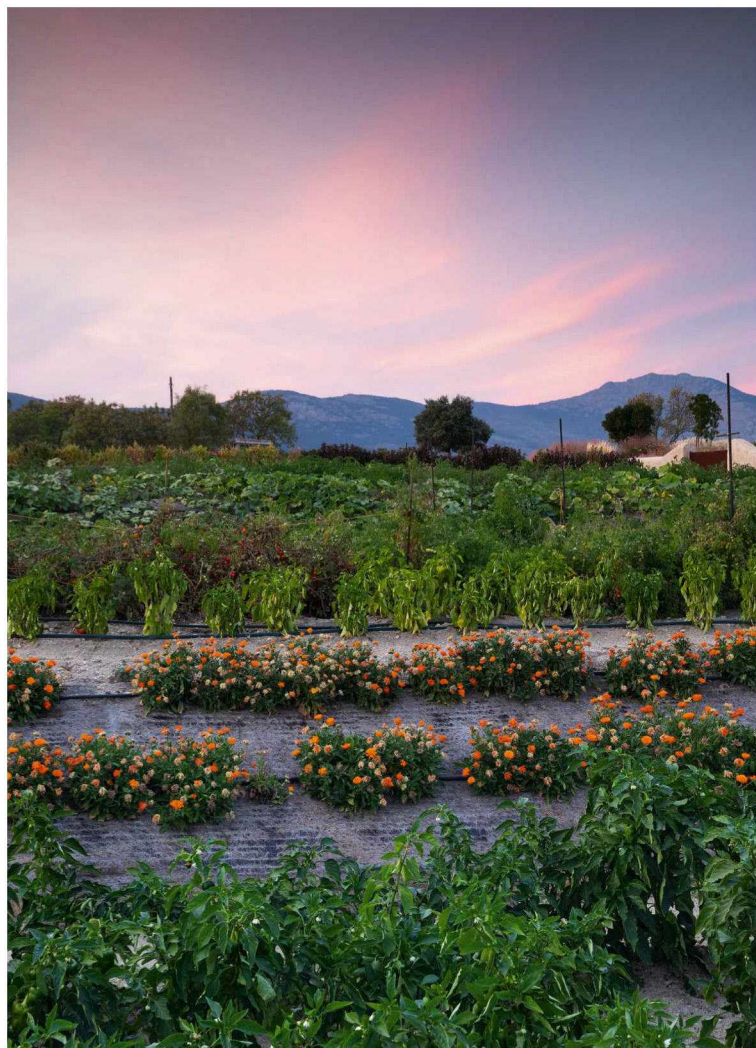
in the strong light. *Oenothera lindheimeri* is a favourite as it flowers for around seven months, has a loose, informal habit and successfully combines with the fresh-green foil of early summer grass foliage, and the ochre and silvery flowering plumes that follow in autumn. Álvaro is a master of using colour in a painterly fashion and appreciates the intricate play of light and shade. Flashes of deep pinks and purples are interspersed among generous sweeps of ornamental grasses, such as *Panicum virgatum*, *Stipa tenuissima* and stately *Miscanthus sinensis*, which bring contrast, movement and textural lightness to the composition, taking it through to late winter.

*Achillea millefolium* seedheads add an additional layer of interest to the buff-coloured grasses and evergreen shrubs that dominate the curved beds surrounding the formal terraces. Divided by paths of crushed granite, this low tapestry of generous perennial borders is punctuated by tall Italian cypresses, which Álvaro thinks of as a “link between heaven and earth”.









▷ with a tough constitution. The trees add formality and structure while also creating a versatile understorey space for seating. Perhaps more importantly, given the area's unforgivingly hot summers, they also provide guests with much-needed shade.

All this formality is softened by deep borders filled with perennials and grasses, which edge the terraces. A colourfully planted cross axis leads guests out from the central outdoor bar to a series of generously spaced, woven raised planters, in which the aromatic herbs that garnish their cocktails are grown.

As the gardens are used for events over a long season, Álvaro needed to create an evolving plant palette with two clear waves of peak flowering. To achieve this, he has used a large percentage of late-flowering grasses that slowly increase in volume as the season progresses and create dramatic textural waves of warm, earthy colour during autumn, standing well into the winter months. One of his favourites is the evergreen muhly grass, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*, which he values for its massed spikelets of airy pink flowers.

Alongside these mostly North American grasses, Álvaro has included many native species, including *Lavandula stoechas*, *Salvia nemorosa*, *Teucrium fruticans* and *Myrtus communis*. The availability in Spain of native,

drought-tolerant plants has vastly improved in recent years, and Álvaro was able to source many of the plants from Spanish nurseries. He favours young plants as they allow roots to establish in the soil, and uses irrigation only occasionally in the first two years while plants establish.

He used few bulbs in the design, the exception being drumstick alliums, which bring a sultry pop of saturated colour in midsummer, and their bulbs have also proved unpalatable to local wildlife.

Some of Álvaro's other plant choices were unfortunately not unpalatable to the native cattle, which initially hampered the development of the garden, munching and flattening an early swath of planting. But their continued presence demonstrates commitment to the farm's history, and brings to life this exciting merging of horticulture, agriculture and gastronomy, born out of the partnership of two remarkable creatives. □

#### USEFUL INFORMATION

**Address** El Jiral de la Mira, M-600,

28209 Guadarrama, Madrid, Spain.

**Tel** +34 618 66 68 78. **Web** [jaraldelamira.com](http://jaraldelamira.com)

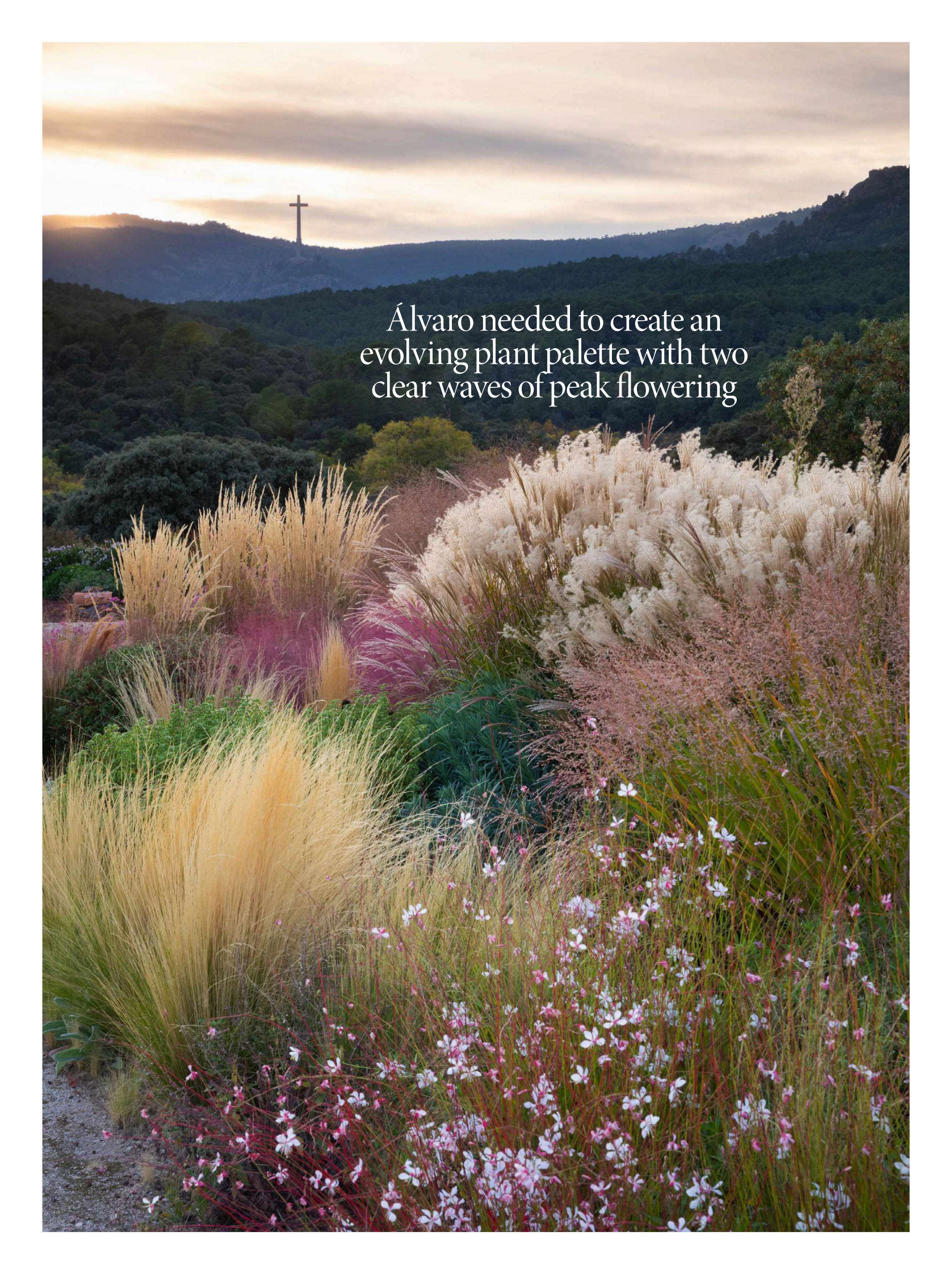
Find out more about Álvaro's work at [alvarosampedro.com](http://alvarosampedro.com)

**Above left** *Calendula officinalis* on the well-ordered slopes of El Jiral de La Mira's productive kitchen garden, which offers guests a direct link to the provenance of their food. Producing more than 30 varieties of heritage and local herbs and vegetables, the kitchen garden and wider biodynamic farm forges a link between the venue's metropolitan sophistication and the area's rich rural heritage.

**Above right** Iberian black pigs munch on beetroot leaves and Swiss chard in the restaurant's kitchen garden. Normally, they are constrained on the farm but occasionally escape, which caused Álvaro headaches in the early days of establishing plants in the garden.

**Right** The airy flowers of the long-season perennial *Oenothera lindheimeri* 'Siskiyou Pink' combine with a mix of grasses, including the distinctively upright *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', groups of *Panicum virgatum*, and the eye-catching, semi-transparent haze of pink *Muhlenbergia capillaris*.





Álvaro needed to create an  
evolving plant palette with two  
clear waves of peak flowering



HORTICULTURAL WHO'S WHO

# PAOLO ARRIGO

The seedsman and slow food champion believes passionately that the future of grow your own lies in preserving heritage varieties and rediscovering lost tastes

WORDS PAULA McWATERS PORTRAIT CRISTIAN BARNETT

**P**aolo Arrigo can't sit still. A fourth-generation London Italian, he wears his multiculturalism on his sleeve, enthusing wildly about all his passions from slow food, endangered vegetables and biodiversity to foraging, cooking from scratch and accordion-playing. He talks quickly and with conviction, always in a hurry to stand up for what he believes in and to get things done. His company, Seeds of Italy, is a full-time job, but he also gives 50 talks a year to groups, sits on several volunteer committees, has just trained as a St John Ambulance operational events first aider and has even gone to the Ukrainian border three times over the past year to drive refugees to safety. When he cares, he acts.

For Paolo, gardening and food are indistinguishable. Seeds of Italy, which he started in 1999, imports and distributes the highly regarded Franchi seed brand from Bergamo in northern Italy, close to the Italian Alps. "I was helping out in my dad's deli in London and I thought it would be cool to have a stand selling seeds. It made perfect sense to me. In an Italian market, tomatoes in all their forms are on sale alongside each other: fresh, bottled as sauce plus the seeds and plants to grow them – it's all seen as food."

Soon he had persuaded other delis and farm shops to take the seed too, and the business took off. Franchi is the oldest family run seed company in the world, established in 1783, and their principles chime with Paolo's. "Franchi aren't just suppliers, they are seed producers: they celebrate heritage, taste and regionality, and commission the seed to be grown just for them. Do you know, a staggering 94 per cent of the world's heritage varieties have been lost over the past century? It matters! We need variety. Seed banks are great as insurance policies but really, the only way to preserve all these wonderful old varieties is to keep growing them."

To bang this drum, Paolo created a Slow Food 'Ark of Taste' garden at the 2019 RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival, which won him not only a seventh RHS medal but also the title of Slow Food in the UK's Person of the Year – a career highlight. "Slow Food is a huge worldwide food movement, founded in Italy [in 1989], that celebrates regional foods and highlights varieties at risk of being lost. Rather than rhinos and pandas two by two, we had endangered vegetables going on to the ark."

There are stories behind many of the 500-plus varieties that Paolo sells in the UK, and he's keen to tell them. "Far from corporate varieties, these are seeds with soul. 'Viroflay' spinach dates back to the 16th century and will give you four harvests a year. It's wonderful but it would never be sold in food shops because you need to eat it as soon as you pick it. Our Neapolitan 'San Marzano 2' seeds originated on the slopes of Mount Vesuvius and they will produce tomatoes that are far superior to any you can buy." His family comes from Piedmont in northern Italy, so he understands food crops for colder climates. "We're great at spring sowing in Britain but the worst at sowing seasonally. Apart from December and January, you can grow vegetables here all year round."

My philosophy is, if you pull something up, why not put something in?"

Brexit has been a thorn in Paolo's side and he still rails against it, citing the increased bureaucracy and continuing uncertainty as massive challenges that have forced him to reduce his available range. In 2019 he launched a Brexit survival kit of 12 vegetable varieties, offering something to sow or harvest every month of the year. "It started as a bit of a joke but actually, it was very well thought out." This year he has responded to 2022's low rainfall by highlighting both drought-resistant vegetable varieties and native British wildflowers. "We try to be very hands on and we love people to call us. Seeds are such a precious

commodity and I want people to understand that."

Helping customers to grow more and grow better is Paolo's quest. Food has always been at the centre of his family life and the how-to book he wrote, *From Seed To Plate* (Simon & Schuster, 2010), honours that tradition. He and his wife Alex, also of Italian heritage, are bringing up their children in the same way: son Vincenzo, 18, and daughter Amelia, 14, have learned to forage fungi, just as Paolo did with his own father. He recounts how, as a teenager, he once played truant and went off into the woods for the day. Coming across two perfect porcini mushrooms presented him with a dilemma, but knowing they were too good to waste, he took them home. "I got a hiding for missing school, but we did have a wonderful porcini risotto that night and secretly, I think my dad was rather proud of me!" □

## USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Seeds of Italy at [seedsofitaly.co.uk](https://seedsofitaly.co.uk)

THE ONLY WAY  
TO PRESERVE  
ALL THESE  
WONDERFUL  
OLD VARIETIES  
IS TO KEEP  
GROWING  
THEM









# In search of the new

The Arboretum Park Härle near Bonn has  
one of Germany's largest snowdrop collections  
thanks to the collecting zeal of its curator

WORDS NAOMI SLADE PHOTOGRAPHS SABRINA ROTHE





**G**reat gardens take time and vision, and many are lost along the way. But not the Arboretum Park Härle, near Bonn in western Germany. This is a collectors' garden, which combined with excellent plantsmanship, has matured into a well-designed space, with a very English flavour. Its story begins in 1921, when Carl Härle bought land around his summer house with plans to create a woodland garden. However, it was two of Carl's daughters, Maria and Regina, who were the real driving forces behind the garden. They took over care of the garden from their father's death in 1950 until their own respective deaths in 1996 and 2000. Maria, in particular, made numerous trips to the UK to visit gardens and to add to her growing plant collection. "We have huge bills in the archives for shipments from Hillier Nurseries," says Michael Dreisvogl, who has been the curator at the arboretum, now a charitable trust, since 2001.

Michael shares Maria's passion for plants and her zeal for collecting. Snowdrops in

particular have become something of an obsession since, aged 20, Michael persuaded his father to take him on a road trip around English nurseries. Their first stop was Elizabeth Strangman's famous Washfield Nursery in Kent, where Elizabeth presented Michael with his first two snowdrops. "It was May, so they were just empty pots," he says, "but it was the beginning."

Back in Germany, a chance encounter with British snowdrop specialist Joe Sharman at a hellebore collection near Bonn led to Michael undertaking a six-week internship at Joe's Monksilver Nursery near Cambridge.

"I was just swept up in the galanthophile scene," says Michael. "Back then the events were smaller and more personal, and I met so many wonderful and generous people. Joe introduced me to Avon Bulbs, Matt Bishop and John Morley. I was very happy to be part of it." His close connection with English gardening has continued, and by the time he took up his post at the arboretum, his address book read like a who's who of UK galanthophile cognoscenti.

The snowdrop collection he's established at Härle now numbers around 400 different

To continue turn to page 71 ►

## IN BRIEF

**What** An established, southwest-facing garden in the Rhein Valley, containing a notably large collection of snowdrops.

**Where** Germany.

**Soil** Sandy, stony loam; well-drained and slightly acid to neutral pH.

**Size** 11 acres.

**Climate** Warm summers, mild winters and not too much rain.

**Hardiness zone** USDA 8a.

**Above left** Michael Dreisvogl, curator at the Arboretum Park Härle, near Bonn, with a fine clump of *Galanthus* 'S. Arnott' and the evergreen leaves of *Bergenia* 'Biedermeier', a German cultivar.

**Above right** In the New Garden, an area of dappled shade and humus-rich soil that dates back to 1978, a semi-circular path runs through the evergreen planting of *Carex* sedges and ferns. A range of snowdrop cultivars are planted at 40cm intervals so they don't get mixed up.

**Facing page** Michael received this striking snowdrop, *Galanthus nivalis* 'Alburgh Claw', as a generous gift from the famous British galanthophile Margaret Owen on the one occasion he met her. At the time, it was a rare and unusual specimen.





A fantastically contorted  
*Styphnolobium japonicum*  
'Pendulum' presides over clumps  
of large-flowered *Galanthus x*  
*valentinei* 'Nothing Special'  
together with a tiny-flowered  
*G. elwesii* that Michael discovered  
on a trip to England, and which he  
has provisionally dubbed 'Giraffe',  
for its tall and slender character.

Most of my snowdrops are  
gifts from galanthophiles, but  
I do find seedlings, and I have  
quite a good eye, I think



# Key snowdrops

## 1 *Galanthus elwesii* 'Casanova'

A new cultivar named by Dutch plantsman and keen galanthophile Gert Jan van der Kolk, in reference to its good looks and magnificent size. 30-35cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b<sup>†</sup>.

**2 *Galanthus x valentinei* 'Lord Lieutenant'** A tough, showy plant, the flower is held at an angle reminiscent of a salute. 25cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**3 *Galanthus nivalis* Scharlockii Group** Distinguished by a spathe that splits to form characteristic 'donkey's ears'. 10-15cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**4 *Galanthus nivalis* 'Alburgh Claw'** A large, long-lasting double flower, with green tips and very thin petals. 15cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**5 *Galanthus x valentinei* 'Primrose Warburg'** Small but perfectly formed, this yellow snowdrop is named for a

well-known galanthophile. 15cm.

AGM\*. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

## 6 *Galanthus plicatus* 'Trympostor'

A vigorous snowdrop with a small flower that forms neat clumps. Much admired by visitors to the garden. 20-25cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

## 7 *Galanthus x valentinei* 'Trym Baby'

Bred by Joe Sharman, this is a tough and vigorous plant which flowers earlier than its parent, *G. plicatus* 'Trym'. 10-15cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**8 *Galanthus nivalis*** A classic species snowdrop. Cheap, reliable and easy to grow. 10cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**9 *Galanthus x valentinei* 'Lapwing'** The inner marking resembles a bird in flight and the outer petals stay open even in cool conditions; a good garden plant. 25cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

## 10 *Galanthus elwesii* 'Margaret Owen'

A large and well-proportioned snowdrop named for the respected British galanthophile famed for her Shropshire snowdrop parties and whom Michael was fortunate enough to meet. 25cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

## 11 *Galanthus x valentinei* 'Philippe André Meyer'

A vigorous snowdrop found in Normandy by Mark Brown, a British galanthophile based in France. Its tiny flowers have a clear stripe. 10-15cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**12 *Galanthus* 'Ailwyn'** A regular and perfect double form with plump buds and impressive flowers. 15cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

**13 *Galanthus* 'Ginns'** A snowy Italian form distinguished for its fantastic almond scent. 15cm. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

\*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.  
<sup>†</sup>Hardiness ratings given where available.





## Michael's snowdrop growing tips

Snowdrops like to grow in cool and shady places and the dappled woodland and humus-rich soil of Arboretum Park Härle provide ideal conditions.

"They like plenty of light when they are in growth, then the trees and perennials provide shade later, when the bulbs are dormant," explains Michael.

The well-cultivated soil is excellent, nutritious and free-draining, so planting is simply a case of loosening the ground with a fork and popping the bulbs in, although rare and expensive varieties are contained in a permeable pond basket for their first few seasons, to make them easier to find.

"When we have new bulbs in spring, I keep them in the pot and feed them well with high-potash liquid fertiliser, before planting out when they are dormant," says Michael, who also divides his bulbs in summer. "Planted in the green, they can need watering and in a big garden they can get lost or forgotten, so it is much better to work with the bulbs."

The garden is mulched annually, using organic matter in shady places and making use of an unusual volcanic mineral in sunny spots.

"We use a kind of lava-gravel," says Michael. "It is cheap and we can source it by the truck-load from just 30km away. The colour blends in with the soil and it dries quickly, but if you look underneath, the soil is still moist."





▷ cultivars, making it one of the largest German collections open to the public. Michael is still always on the lookout for something new. “Most of my snowdrops are gifts from galanthophiles,” he says. “Breeding is not my cup of tea, but I do find seedlings, and I have quite a good eye, I think.” His discoveries include a plant he calls *Galanthus* ‘Giraffe’, found in a British hedgerow, and a plump, double flower he has named *G. ‘Franz Josef’*, in jocular reference to the portly Bavarian politician Franz Josef Strauss.

Over the years, Michael’s taste in snowdrops has changed. “When I started gardening, I preferred unusual and strange cultivars,” he says, “but now I prefer good garden plants, such as ‘S. Arnott’ and ‘Ginns’.” I think *G. elwesii* ‘Mrs Macnamara’ is my overall favourite; it has perfect proportions of leaf and stem and it looks great in a clump.”

At the arboretum, he steers away from the more expensive and unusual snowdrops, which he says can be difficult to grow, and favours those that create big, vigorous clumps that are easy to admire. “You shouldn’t need a magnifying glass,” he says. To create a more naturalistic display, Michael and his team grow the snowdrops alongside seasonal

companions and the garden’s extensive collection of ferns. These don’t simply create an attractive foil, but separate the clumps for ease of identification, although hybrid seedlings do still occasionally appear.

Building up a snowdrop collection takes patience. “You start with a single bulb and then you wait,” says Michael. “Every year there are more flowers, and after 15 years you look around and think, ‘You know, I think I have a snowdrop garden.’ It is fantastic to be in the same place for a long time; to see things grow and die, to make mistakes and move on. We will have challenges with climate change, but although this is a historic garden, it is a living garden, and it is important to keep developing and moving forward.” □

#### USEFUL INFORMATION

**Address** Arboretum Park Härle, Büchelstraße 40, 53227 Bonn, Germany. **Tel** +49 (0)228 24992710. **Web** [arboretum-haerle.de](http://arboretum-haerle.de)

**Open** For groups by appointment during snowdrop season, and on selected dates throughout the year. See website for details.

**GI** Discover the best spots to see snowdrops in the UK at [gardensillustrated.com/snowdrops](http://gardensillustrated.com/snowdrops)

**Facing page** Michael has developed the snowdrop meadow over a period of about 15 years, adding new clones of *Galanthus nivalis* to the original planting, together with clumps of *G. ‘S. Arnott’*, which add height.

**Above left** Throughout the garden, snowdrops are grown in combination with other plants. Frequently Michael uses ferns, such as the soft shield fern, *Polystichum setiferum*, which work well among the trees and shrubs of the arboretum and on this shady slope provide a lovely green foil to *Galanthus ‘Imbolc’* and *Crocus tommasinianus*.

**Above right** Delicate *Galanthus plicatus* ‘Trympostor’ grows alongside pale *Helleborus x hybridus* and *Arum italicum* in the winter garden. In this space, the focus is on plants that perform early in the year, including winter-interest stems – one of the influences Maria Härle introduced to the garden from her travels to England.



## IN BRIEF

**What** Provençal garden, designed to encourage wildlife.

**Where** South of France.

**Size** Just over two acres.

**Soil** Very poor, stony, shale-like alkaline substrate with a thin humus layer that has built up over time.

**Climate** Continental. Extremely dry, south-facing slope about 600m above sea level.

**Hardiness zone** USDA 9.

The imposing black metal structure with sliding shutters, which surrounds this Provençal house, extends around existing olive trees, allowing designer James Basson to link house and landscape by bringing his mix of drought-tolerant planting in gravel right up to the door.



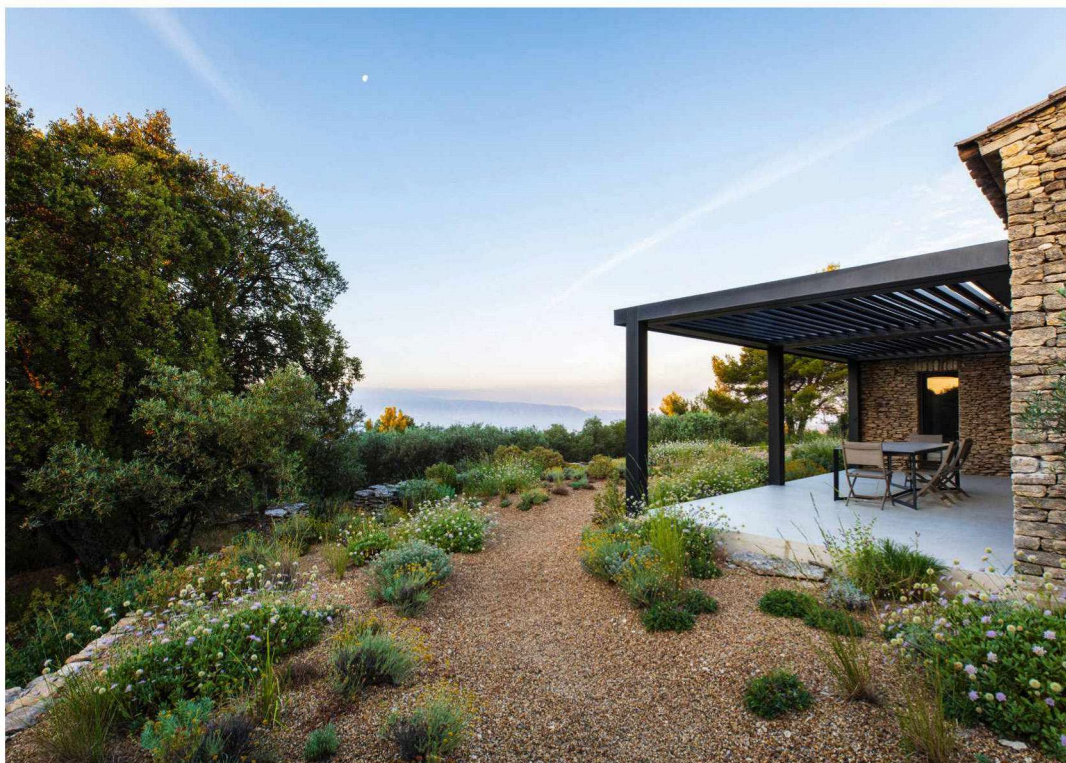
# Natural pleasures

In a dry, French landscape, designer James Basson has created a low-input, high-impact garden to delight an English client in search of simple luxury

WORDS MARIAN BOSWALL PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS







1



2



3

## KEY PLANTS

### 1 *Centaurea bella*

This slow-growing groundcover creates reliable dense cushions low to the ground. It's long lived and these seedheads continue to add interest once the wonderful pinkish flowers have finished. 25cm x 45cm.

### 2 *Satureja thymbra*

Late-flowering sub-shrub with fragrant foliage. Pinkish-purple flowers are followed by strong seedheads throughout the summer. 40cm x 40cm. USDA 6a-9b.

### 3 *Artemisia caerulescens*

Small and reliable with good silver colour. It has proved to be a real winner in James's lower plantings. 1m x 30cm.

Key plants continue on page 76.



**Top** Stunning views out across the olive groves towards Roussillon are framed by the main dining pergola with planting that includes *Lomelosia minoana* and *Brachypodium phoenicoides*.

**Right** In a sunny spot leading to the woodland of evergreen holm oaks and pines, James has included a mix of colourful and fragrant plants, such as the grass *Brachypodium phoenicoides*, *Cistus albidus*, *Lomelosia minoana* and *Helichrysum italicum*.







**J**ames Basson was at Chelsea on his second Gold-winning garden for L'Occitane when he overheard someone comment that it looked like “just a goat path”. Luckily, he took this as a compliment, as did the next person, who said it looked just like the conditions at her house in southern France, and commissioned him on the spot. The result is a stunning garden in the Gordes region, an area known for minimal rainfall and long, hot summers.

Brought up in the South of France, James has the Mediterranean *terroir* in his blood. He uses the natural landscape as his muse and travels whenever possible to Greece and Turkey, to understand and emulate the natural growth patterns of the drought- and wind-tolerant layers that make up this raw, beautiful region. In tough conditions like this, James chooses his projects carefully. “Our clients are people who like gardens and plants, not just pretty pictures,” he says.

For this site, the owner gave the team at Scape Design a brief to encourage local wildlife and create a feel of simple ‘barefoot luxury’. It sits down a winding road, with fragile dry-stone walls, surrounded by

stone outcrops and ancient bories – round sheep shelters made of field stone that are common to this part of France. At its centre is the house of local flaked limestone, surrounded by a distinctive pergola. The garden in which it now sits is stunning; a lesson in working with, rather than against, nature.

James worked with the natural contours to envelop the house in its sloping setting. He raised the swimming pool to reconnect it with the living spaces. To avoid waste, he kept existing retaining walls, burying half their height to bring the garden back to a human scale. “I wanted the building to feel submerged back into the landscape,” he says. “The garden is inspired by the landscape, which is simple and low because there is no topsoil and little water. I wanted to extend this to wrap around the house.”

He also used the imposing square metal pergola, which provides shade and structure at the entrance, to connect the house and the land. “The architectural detailing of the black powder-coated pergola sent the house out into the garden space. This framework was bedded into the gravel, allowing us to plant around but also through it with ancient olives ▸

**Above** The old driveway was moved to allow for a gracious terrace leading to the front door, which is framed by an ancient olive grove. A wide space left between pompoms of *Lomelosia minoana*, *Iris unguicularis* and the silver foliage of *Artemisia caerulea* allows for occasional heavy deliveries.





## MORE KEY PLANTS

### 4 *Helichrysum italicum*

Throughout summer this breathes a musky scent into the air that evokes the dry air of the Mediterranean. Stays small and tidy in really poor soil. 50cm x 50cm. RHS H4.

### 5 *Salvia multicaulis*

A favourite of James's for creating a low groundcover. Its red calyces shine on well into late spring and early summer. 30cm x 90cm.

### 6 *Ptilostemon chamaepeuce*

An extraordinary plant that is bringing a new structure and texture to James's low-growing plantings. A lover of shade and sun, it manages to traverse the garden, popping up here and there. 60cm x 90cm. RHS H3, USDA 9a-11b.

\*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

**Top** The gravel path is flanked by the grass *Hyparrhenia hirta* and the shrubby scabious *Lomelosia minoana*, with taller spikes of *Foeniculum vulgare*, which James adds at a low percentage and allows to self-seed.

**Right** One of two ancient bories that James wanted to keep for their historic value. These stone structures, where a shepherd could weather a storm or a cold night, are common to this area. In this garden, where the owner wanted to encourage wildlife, they now house an impressive colony of bats.







▷ and *Lomelosia minoana*, to blur the boundaries between buildings and garden.”

The masterplan was built around two ancient bories. James wanted to keep them for their historical value, to honour the heritage of the local way of life. “We kept the perspectives open to them, allowing them to be discoverable among the stunted olives. They are part of a re-embroidered landscape rather than installing vistas, which would make them feel over important.”

James’s planting plays with layers and a limited palette. “If you look at a Mediterranean landscape,” he says, “you will often have three species that dominate. We plant in bands to create this effect. You never see them as bands, but you get a sense of harmony in repetition.” Starting with evergreens and plants for structure, such as *Phillyrea angustifolia*, James adds drama with grasses and herbaceous plants, then finally a design layer that includes colour or seedheads with *Salvia multicaulis*. Flowers are a spring luxury in this heat and James celebrates the dry look; there is exquisite beauty in the backlit seedheads of *Lomelosia minoana*.

Plants have to be tough, but tough conditions don’t mean compromising on good looks. Deep-rooted

*Pistacia*, for example, takes on a brighter green as conditions get drier, and while in this garden James would have loved to have used moss, he found sedums better suited to his stone mulch.

When it rains, the garden comes alive with springs, but this water quickly disappears. “The plants have to survive four to six months of drought every year,” explains James. New planting is done in autumn and each new plant gets 30 litres of water every three weeks for the first year only. Water is scarce, although not as expensive as it should be, but labour is expensive and James works on a ‘total cost of ownership’ basis for his gardens, accepting 10 per cent plant loss and always planting small. He plants through 8-10cm of gravel or crushed stone mulch and sources strong plants, which are supplied in long-rooted pots, from the nursery of dry-gardening guru Olivier Filippi.

James claims his gardens can be a tough sell in the first year, but there was no such issue with this enlightened client, whose reward is a haven in the sun. □

#### USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about James’s work at [scapedesign.com](http://scapedesign.com)

**Above** James wanted to bring the pool out into the landscape as much as possible, so this terrace was designed to allow maximum planting in and around the pool area. *Cistus albidus*, *Salvia rosmarinus* and *Lotus hirsutus* feature, along with a yellow haze of the grass *Hyparrhenia hirta*.



# Wonders of the wild

There's nothing like an expanse of wildflowers to gladden the heart and there are amazing natural superblooms to experience all over the world. Roll up for some of the best shows on Earth

COMPILED BY JODIE JONES, MARTHA KREMPER AND VERONICA PEERLESS

## Olympic National Park, Washington, USA

There are stunning temperate rainforests in the west of the Olympic National Park, especially around Quinalt and Hoh, where you will find trails with giant Sitka spruce and red cedar so thickly draped in moss and epiphytes that the effect is positively prehistoric. The park also has excellent displays of wildflowers above the treeline, starting at around 1,300m. According to the renowned American plantsman and plant collector Dan Hinkley, the road that leads to Hurricane Ridge, in the northern Olympics, is the only place in the park where you can drive on a paved road from sea level to alpine meadow, through wildflower displays that vary from year to year depending on the amount of snow that falls. "Great drifts of our native *Erythronium*

*montanum* (pictured) can be seen in meadows nearing the top," he says. "On scree slopes soon after snow melt, the squat but intensely blue Olympic or rockslide larkspur, *Delphinium glareosum*, is common, while in wet seeps, both *Caltha leptosepala*, the white marsh margiold, and *Trollius laxus* subsp. *albiflorus* blossom concurrently. On drier slopes, the very lovely western pasqueflower, *Pulsatilla occidentalis*, flowers in July, resulting soon after in extremely large silky seedheads." Mount Rainier, in the Cascade Mountains, is also well worth visiting. The visitor centres at Paradise Meadows and Sunrise are informative and make a good base from which to explore. Find out more at [nps.gov/olym](https://nps.gov/olym)



## Atacama Desert, Chile

One of the driest places on earth, Chile's Atacama Desert periodically bursts into flower in a phenomenon known as *desierto florido*, or flowering desert. This usually happens once every five to seven years, producing a spectacular display when more than 200 kinds of flowers cover the normally barren land in carpets of yellow, pink and red, including the native annual *Cistanthe longiscapa*. As with any natural phenomenon, precise timings are unpredictable – the last superbloom event, which happened in October 2021, was the third in six years – but heavy rains in April are a reasonable indicator of flowers to come. The best displays are usually to be found in the region around the port city of Huasco. Find out more at [chile.travel/en](https://chile.travel/en)

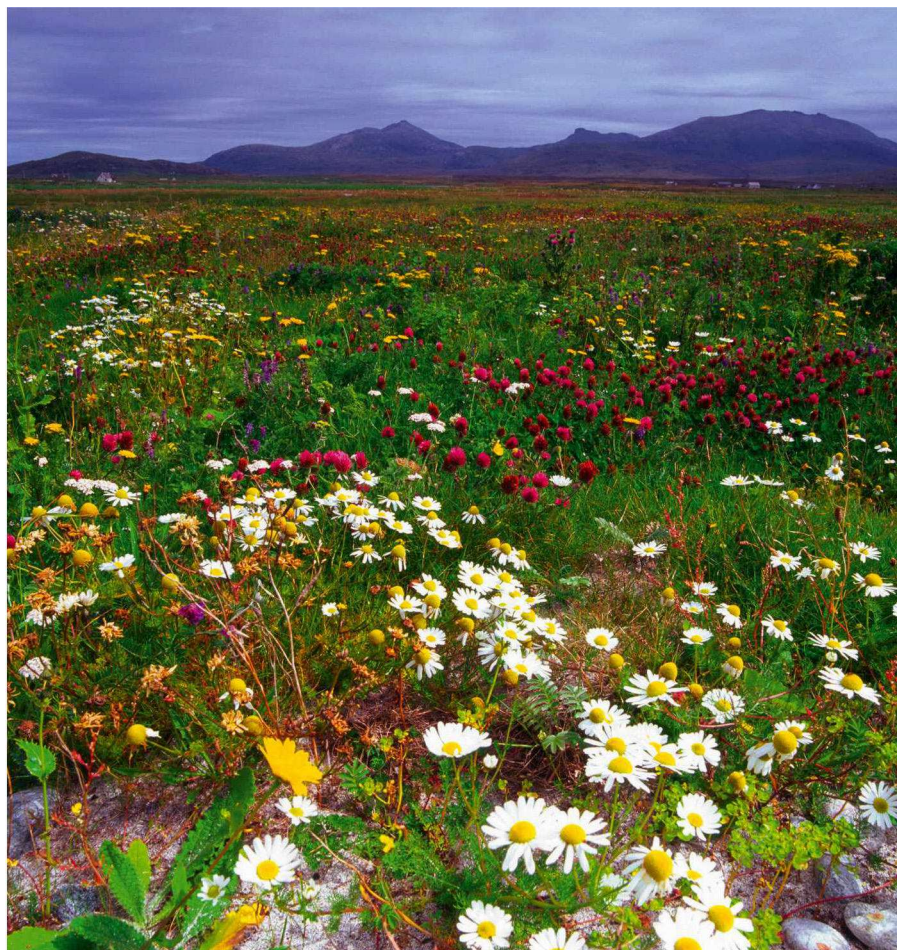


## Transylvanian meadows, Romania

This part of Romania has the largest, and arguably most important, wildflower-rich lowland grasslands in Europe, notably in the area known as the Saxon Villages. Displays build from early May through to July. In May, *Crambe tatarica*, *Dictamnus albus* and the spectacular *Salvia nutans* are among the special plants that cover dry steppic slopes in a tapestry of colour. From early June, the hay meadows are at their best. Enthusiasts include HM King Charles III, a regular visitor who has taken a close interest in the region since 1998, but botanist and Transylvanian meadow expert Dr John Akeroyd warns that this priceless landscape is under threat as a result of the increasing adoption of intensive modern farming. For these wildflower meadows to survive, he says, they need to be integral to sustainable development, and responsible tourism is one way in which they can contribute to a prosperous future for local people.







## The machair of the Outer Hebrides, UK

Machair is the Gaelic word for a fertile, low-lying grassy plain filled with a wonderful mixture of annuals, biennials and perennials, and it is one of the rarest habitats in Europe (there are also examples in west and northwest Ireland). In the Outer Hebrides, machair runs up the western shores of Uist, and Lewis and Harris, and although the most impressive displays are to be found on the west coasts of North Uist and South Uist between mid-June and early August, there is plenty of botanical interest from mid-April onwards. The spectacle ranges from bright carpets of golden corn marigolds (*Glebionis segetum*) and scarlet field poppies, to the subtler delights of soft-purple Hebridean spotted orchids (*Dactylorhiza maculata* subsp. *fuchsii*). Get there by scheduled daily flight from four UK airports or use the Western Isles ferry service ([calmac.co.uk](http://calmac.co.uk)). Find out more at [visitouterhebrides.co.uk](http://visitouterhebrides.co.uk)



## Desert blooms, Arizona, USA

Dramatic thunder rips through the quiet deserts of the American South West, a deluge of winter rain is unleashed from raging black clouds, drenching the dirt. In early spring, air temperature warms and a few weeks in, tiny, promising seedlings sprout and ripple across the flatlands. Soon the desert is flushed with a glorious patchwork of blues, golds, pinks and white – the superbloom has begun. The tapestry is at its most spectacular when conditions favour both the desert's perennial and annual wildflowers. Purple *Lupinus sparsiflorus*, deep-yellow *Eschscholzia californica* subsp. *mexicana*, vibrant-pink *Penstemon parryi* and white *Hesperocallis undulata* bloom en masse, providing a nectar feast for solitary desert bees on the desert *bajadas*. Accessible places to view the wildflower blooms include the Superstition Mountains east of Phoenix, the Saguaro National Park, Tucson, and Picacho Peak State Park between Phoenix and Tucson, and the Mojave Desert, part of which extends into Arizona. Find out more at [desertusa.com](http://desertusa.com)



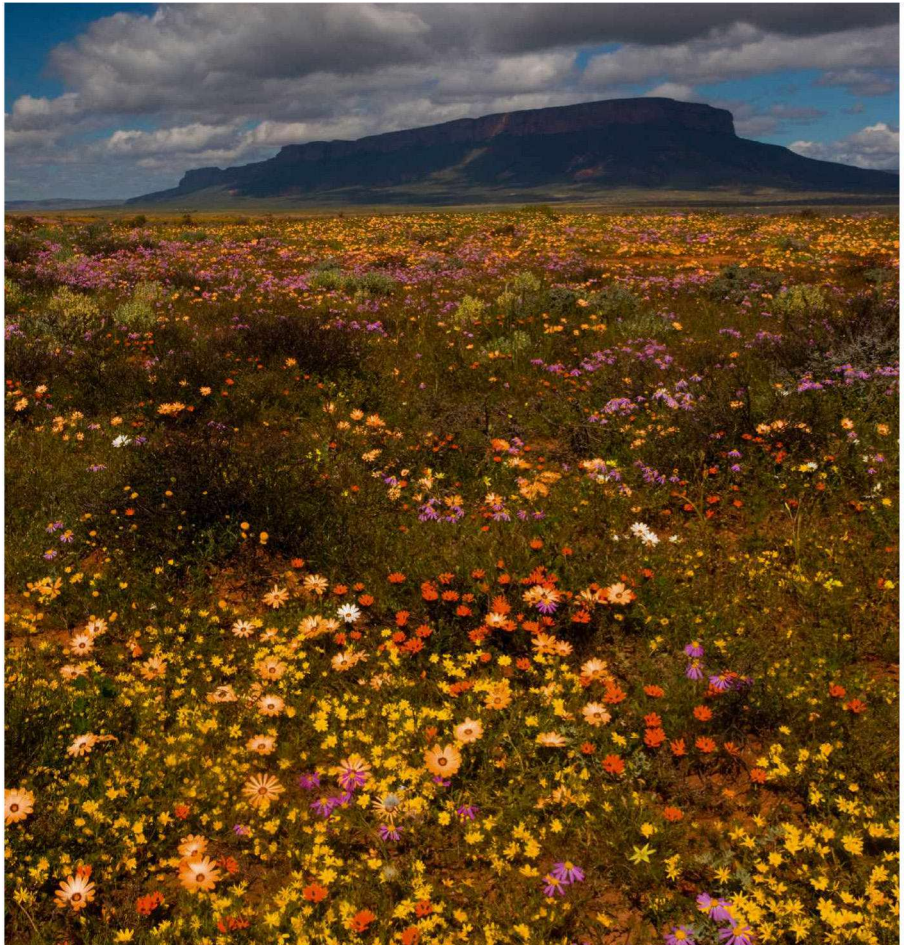
Discover how desert plants have inspired designer Martha Krempel's garden at [gardensillustrated.com/marthasgarden](http://gardensillustrated.com/marthasgarden)

NAVIN MISTRY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; RONNIE BRUGGE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; BOB GIBBONS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; SOUTHERN LIGHTSCAPES-AUSTRALIA / GETTY IMAGES



## Namaqualand, South Africa

This vast area is a Mecca for botanists, with peak flowering from late July to September, following the winter rains, which generally fall between March and August. The Namaqualand region is home to more than 3,000 species of native plants (around half of which are only found here) including many fascinating succulents and bulbs, although the showiest and most photogenic displays come from the annual species that burst into life in the spring. The Goegap Nature Reserve, east of Springbok, makes a good start point for a tour, and houses a visitor centre as well as the Hester Malan Wildflower Garden, which has an excellent collection of succulents. The Skilpad Wildflower Reserve, within the Namaqua National Park, is thickly carpeted in Namaqualand daisies (*Dimorphotheca sinuata*) from July to September. Further south, the displays start a little later, when Ramskop Nature Garden in Clanwilliam and the West Coast National Park at Langebaan are at their best. There is even a hotline (+27 (0)72 938 8186) you can call for advice about the very best floral displays. Find out more at [sanparks.org](http://sanparks.org)



## Lizard Peninsula, Cornwall, UK

Visit this most southerly point of the British mainland for truly lovely displays of coastal flowers in May and June, and a unique heathland vegetation, which is at its best in August and September. The rocky, coastal grasslands of the Lizard are the most important example – as an assemblage of rare as well as colourful plants over serpentine rocks – of the wildflower-rich coastal grasslands of southwest England and west Wales. According to Plantlife, nearly half of all Britain's native flora can be found here, including 55 rare species, and it is internationally recognised as an Important Plant Area. The area around Kynance Cove is particularly rich in flora, with 14 species of clover, scilla, sea campion (*Silene uniflora*), thrift, wild asparagus and broom. In late summer, vast carpets of Cornish heath (*Erica vagans*) send the native insect population into a vibrating frenzy of delight. Find out more at [visitcornwall.com](http://visitcornwall.com)

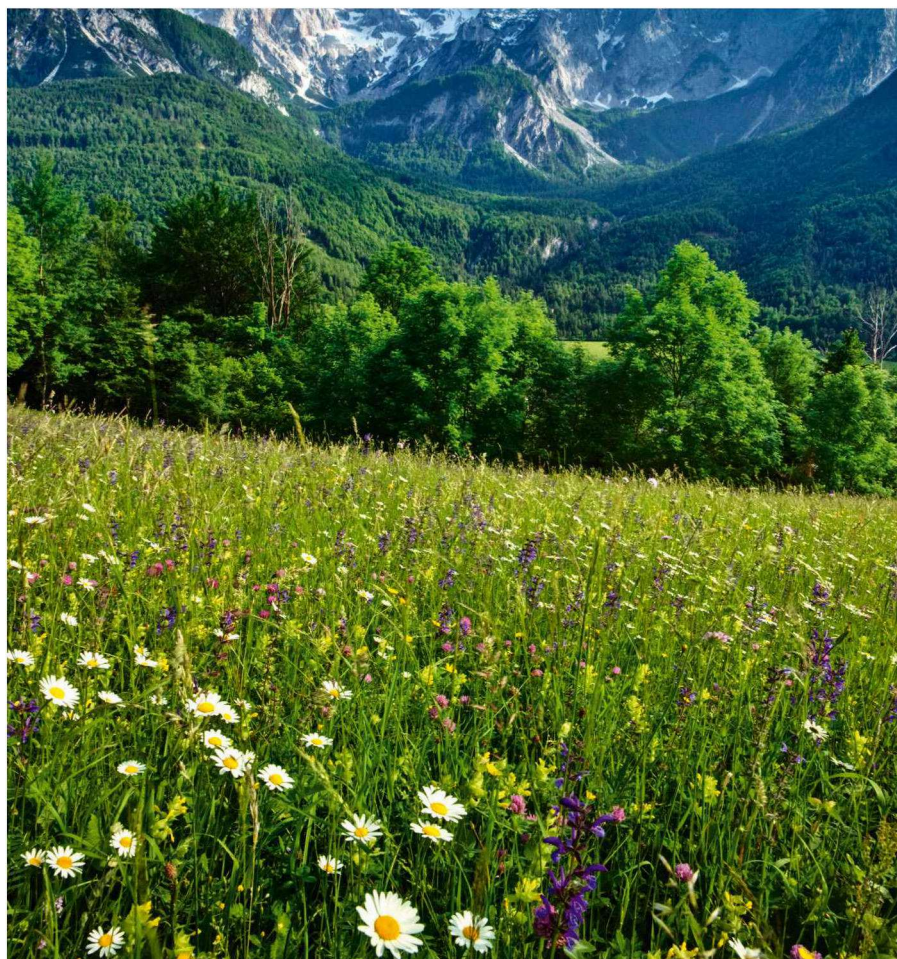






## Piano Grande, Monti Sibillini National Park, Italy

This extensive, high-altitude plain produces an extraordinarily rich floral display, with a long season of interest beginning with narcissi, fritillaries and early orchids in May, followed by an explosion of cornflowers, poppies and other colourful annuals that usually runs on into July. This wildflower spectacular is known as the *fioritura* and is celebrated locally with a festival in the small hill town of Castelluccio di Norcia (also known for its gourmet lentil harvest), which is usually held on the third and final Sundays of June ([castellucciadinorcia.it](http://castellucciadinorcia.it)). The whole Piano Grande area falls within the Monti Sibillini National Park. Find out more at [sibillini.net](http://sibillini.net)



## Julian Alps, Slovenia

In the northeastern corner of Slovenia lie the Julian Alps, home to limestone mountains, crystal-clear lakes and rivers, alpine pastures and meadows. The area is exceptionally rich in wildflowers, thanks to the protection of the Triglav National Park and traditional farming practices. In late May and early June, the ancient, man-made hay meadows at the base of the valleys erupt into a haze of wildflowers – many of them familiar, but rarely seen in such abundance. Before they are cut for hay (still dried on traditional wooden racks), they are studded with the jewel hues of viper's bugloss, meadow clary, cranesbill, speedwells, knautia, ox-eye daisies, *Achillea millefolium*, at least a dozen orchids, and more. In June and July, the flowers higher up in the mountains are less showy but no less impressive – you may spot aquilegias, orchids (including the bird's nest orchid, *Neottia nidus-avis*), gentians, cypress spurge, alpine clematis, and, if you're lucky, the elusive *Lilium carnioolicum*. The floral richness of the area is celebrated each year at the International Wildflower Festival in Bohinj.



Read more about Bohinj's Wildflower Festival at [gardensillustrated.com/slovenia](http://gardensillustrated.com/slovenia)

ROMAOSLO / GETTY IMAGES; AVALON RED / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; OBENCEN / GETTY IMAGES. WITH THANKS TO BOB GIBBONS, DAN HINKLEY, CHRIS AND JOHN AKEROYD FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE WITH THIS FEATURE.





## Rhododendron trails, Nepal

This tiny country is an unforgettable sight in the spring (from March to May), when the forests shine with red, pink and white rhododendron blooms offset by a backdrop of snow-covered mountains. *Rhododendron arboreum*, growing to around 20m high, is the national flower of Nepal, but there are more than 30 different species great and small, including the dainty 30cm-high *Rhododendron forrestii*, spread across the wider Himalayan regions (including Tibet and Bhutan). There are many routes, all at relatively high elevations, but the Ghorepani Poon Hill trek, which takes you up to 3,200m, is often singled out as one of the best.

### HOW GET THERE

- Chris Dalzell, former curator of the Durban Botanical Gardens, organises boutique tours in South Africa in spring [chrisdalzellinternational.com](http://chrisdalzellinternational.com)
- Discover Tarnava Mare ([discover tarnavamare.org](http://discover tarnavamare.org)) and Fundatia ADEPT Transilvania ([fundatia-adept.org](http://fundatia-adept.org)) run tours in Romania.
- Earthbound Expeditions organises rhododendron trekking tours in Nepal [earthboundexpeditions.co.uk](http://earthboundexpeditions.co.uk)
- Greentours, run by ecologist Ian Green, offers various botanical trips ([greentours.co.uk](http://greentours.co.uk)), as does Naturetrek ([naturetrek.co.uk](http://naturetrek.co.uk))
- *Gardens Illustrated*'s botanical adviser, Dr James Compton, leads botanical tours in Greece [iliasholidays.co.uk/holidays/spring-flowers-botanical-tours](http://iliasholidays.co.uk/holidays/spring-flowers-botanical-tours)



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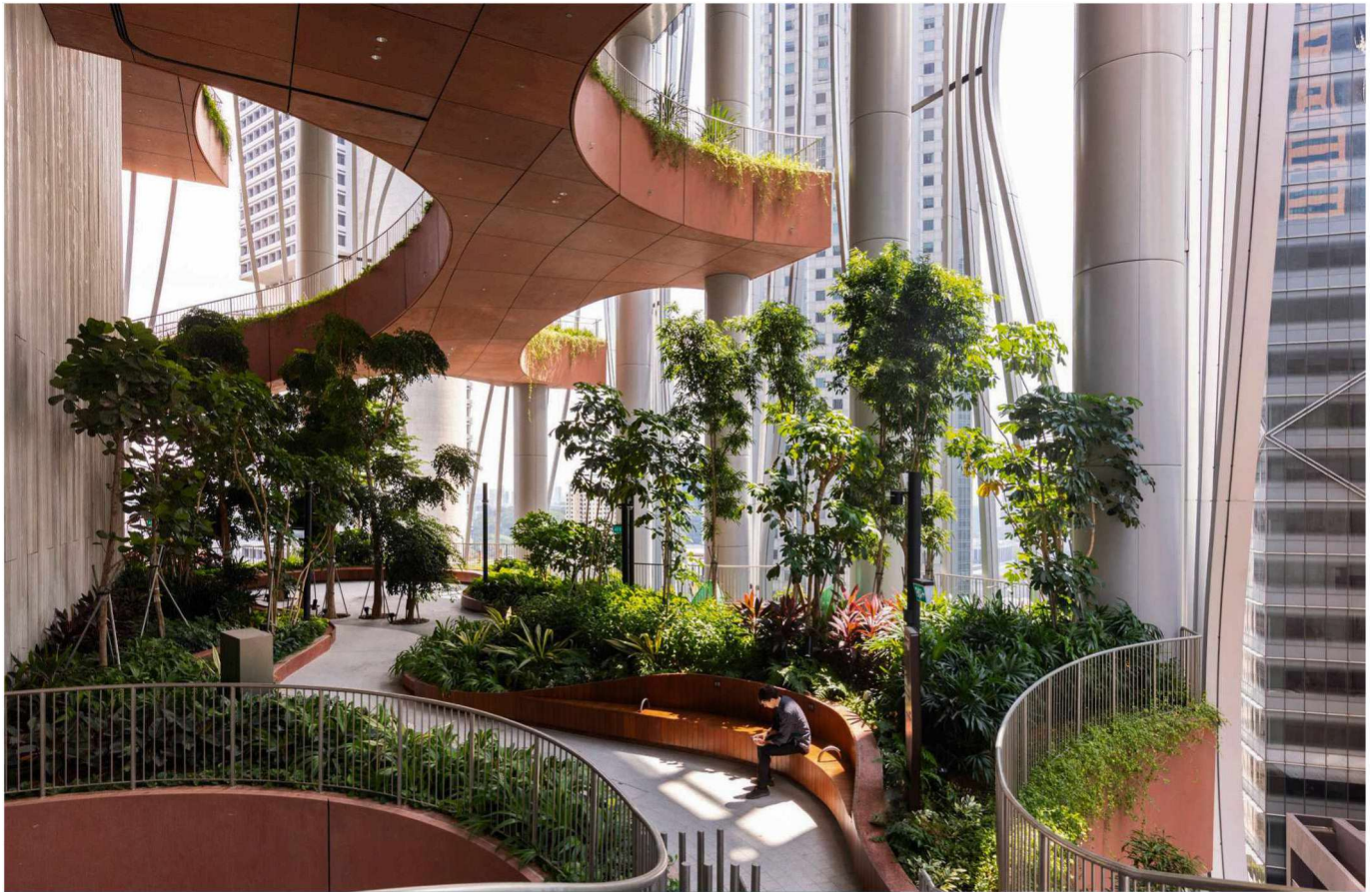
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# Design

*News, garden design trends and sourcebook*



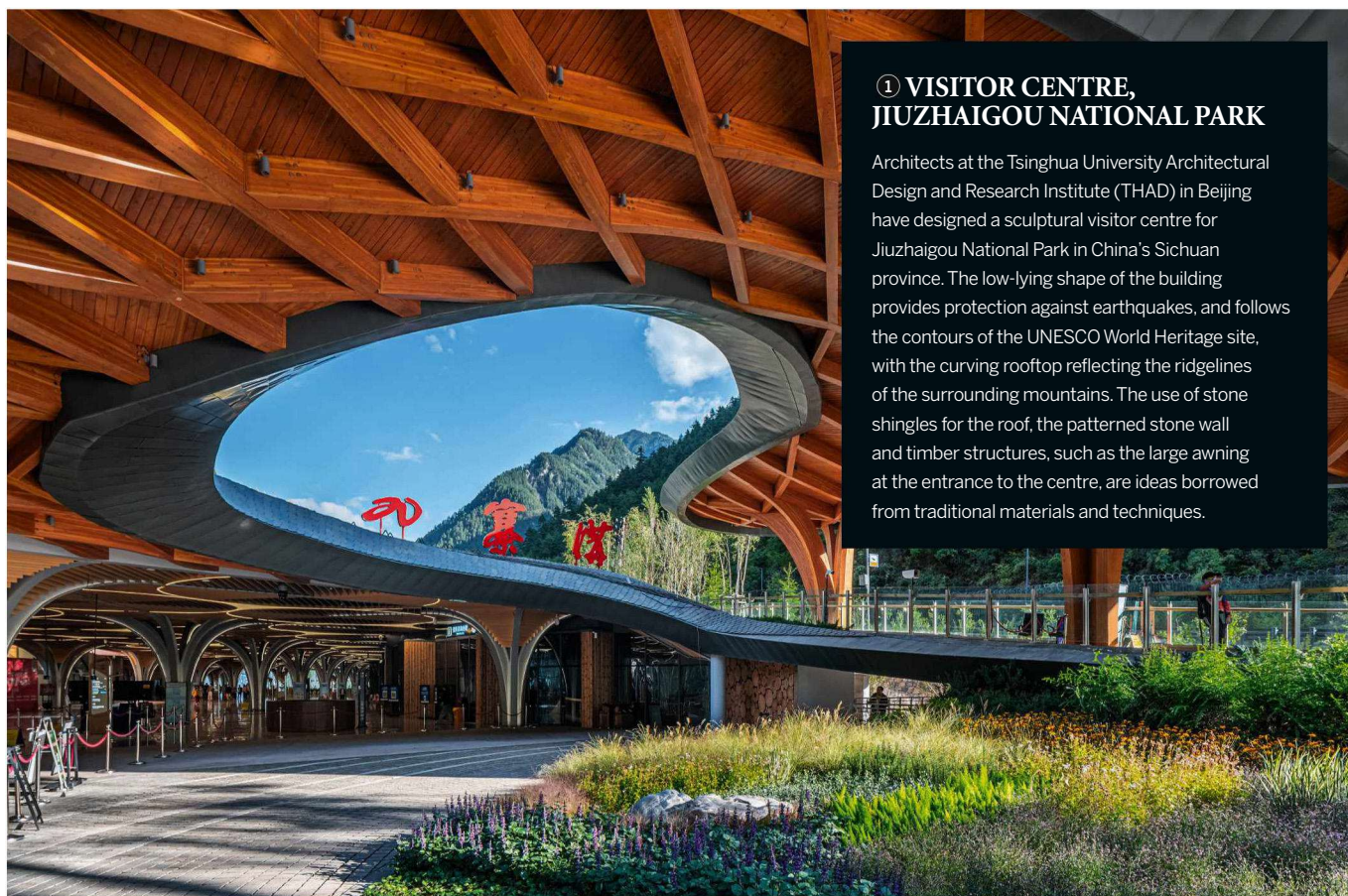
## GROWING UP

A four-storey vertical park is at the heart of one of Singapore's tallest buildings, the new 280m-tall CapitaSpring. Named the Green Oasis, the vertical park is filled with tropical plants and trees that create a sense of entering a tropical rainforest. On its ground level, CapitaSpring has a linear park and public plaza, while pockets of green spaces and gardens throughout the building are revealed through openings in the façade. Designed by Danish studio BIG and Italian firm Carlo Ratti Associati, the 51-storey skyscraper is a mixed-use building that combines residential and office space with restaurants, cafés and a food market. A sky garden on the rooftop features 150 species of edible plants, which are used in the building's cafés and restaurants. [big.dk](http://big.dk); [carloratti.com](http://carloratti.com)



FINNBAR FALLON



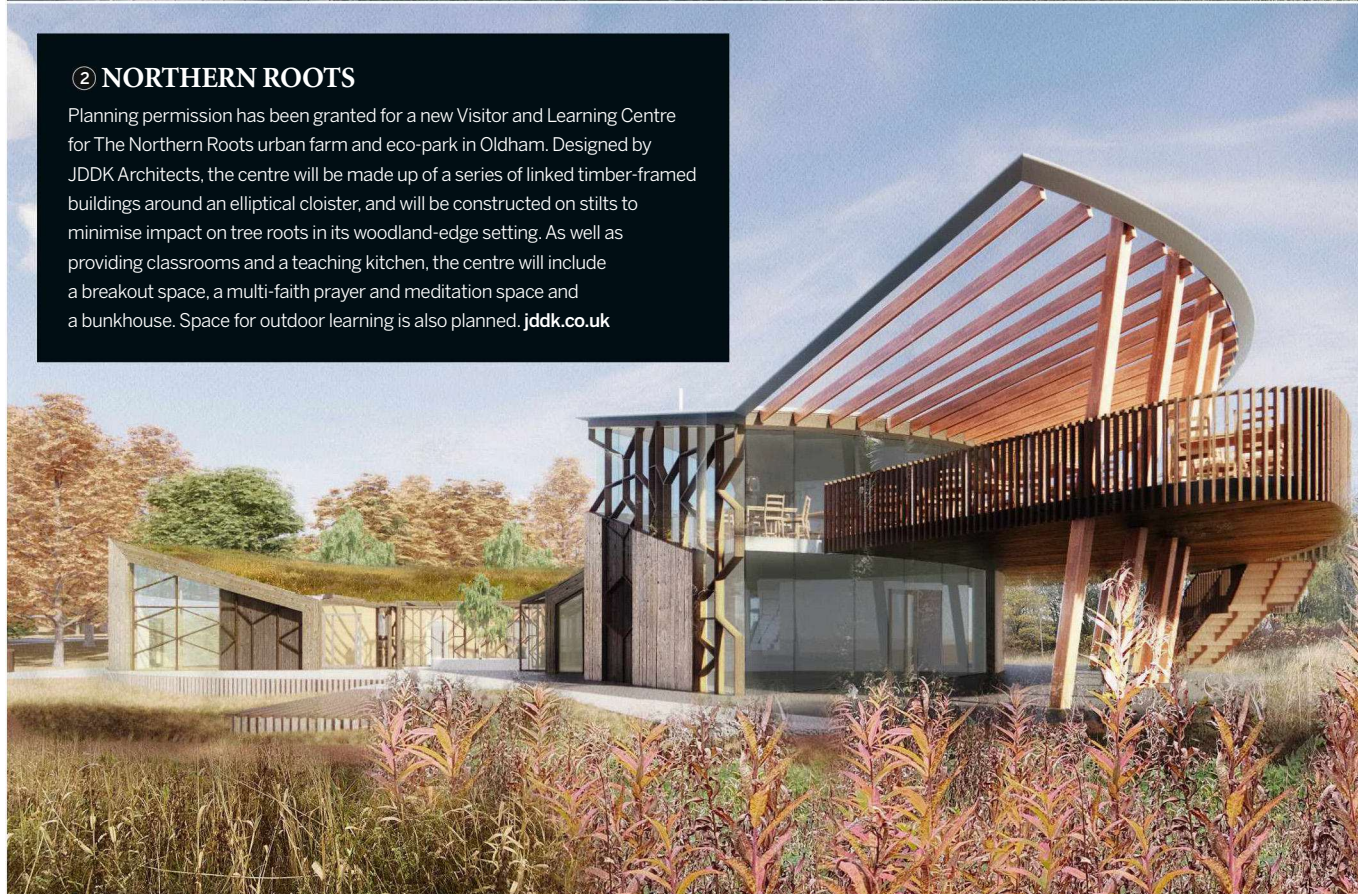


## ① VISITOR CENTRE, JIUZHAGOU NATIONAL PARK

Architects at the Tsinghua University Architectural Design and Research Institute (THAD) in Beijing have designed a sculptural visitor centre for Jiuzhaigou National Park in China's Sichuan province. The low-lying shape of the building provides protection against earthquakes, and follows the contours of the UNESCO World Heritage site, with the curving rooftop reflecting the ridgelines of the surrounding mountains. The use of stone shingles for the roof, the patterned stone wall and timber structures, such as the large awning at the entrance to the centre, are ideas borrowed from traditional materials and techniques.

## ② NORTHERN ROOTS

Planning permission has been granted for a new Visitor and Learning Centre for The Northern Roots urban farm and eco-park in Oldham. Designed by JDDK Architects, the centre will be made up of a series of linked timber-framed buildings around an elliptical cloister, and will be constructed on stilts to minimise impact on tree roots in its woodland-edge setting. As well as providing classrooms and a teaching kitchen, the centre will include a breakout space, a multi-faith prayer and meditation space and a bunkhouse. Space for outdoor learning is also planned. [jddk.co.uk](http://jddk.co.uk)







### ③ GREEN STREETS

Plans to green up Grey Street in Newcastle upon Tyne have been approved by the City Council. LDA Design's masterplan for the historic street creates wider pavements and new seating with spaces for wheelchairs and pushchairs. New planting will increase biodiversity, while a rain garden will provide sustainable drainage. The removal of pay-and-display parking and the addition of a dedicated cycle route will help the city achieve its commitment to becoming carbon neutral. Work to make the street greener and more welcoming will start in spring. [lda-design.co.uk](http://lda-design.co.uk); [newcastle.gov.uk](http://newcastle.gov.uk)

### ④ LEARNING HUB

Work has begun to construct a new Learning Hub for the Harmony Education Trust at its 35-acre estate in Midlothian, Scotland. The L-shaped building, designed by Loader Monteith and SJM Studios Architects, will be used by the Trust to provide a technology, arts and design programme for disadvantaged teenagers. The design makes the most of the hub's woodland setting with covered outdoor classroom spaces and indoor spaces that will look out on to the woodland. A timber colonnade will connect the building with its surroundings. [harmony.org.uk](http://harmony.org.uk); [loadermonteith.co.uk](http://loadermonteith.co.uk)

### ⑤ HOUSE OF MUSIC

The House of Music, a wave-inspired representation of resonating sound, has won the Architectural Design of the Year at the 2022 Architecture MasterPrize awards in Los Angeles. Designed by Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto, the museum has a large undulating roof punctuated by trees and clad in metal leaves, and aims to evoke the feeling of being under a tree canopy. The glass-framed ground floor is a space for concert halls while the basement houses gallery spaces. It is the latest addition to the Liget Budapest Project, which since 2018 has been revitalising the largest public park in Hungary's capital city. [ligetbudapest.hu](http://ligetbudapest.hu)

### ⑥ APLD AWARDS

Designer Jo Thompson won Gold in three categories at the 2022 Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD) International Landscape Design Awards. Her design for a naturalistic garden in Kent (above), which brings nature right up to the back door, took Gold in two categories – Planting and Residential – while a coastal garden in East Sussex, in which driftwood timbers and natural stone elements anchor the garden in its setting, won Gold in the Details category. McWilliam Studio was awarded Best of Show for its Shenzhen Flower Show 2021 garden, Between Heaven and Earth. [apld.org](http://apld.org)



# Sensitive approach

# Design trends 2023

# Simple planting

# Shifts in colour

In gardening, as in many areas of our lives, a new year calls for a fresh perspective, so we asked eight leading designers to share their thoughts on the challenges and trends in garden design for 2023. Climate change and sustainability continue to dominate the conversation, with a focus on resilient planting, natural and recycled materials and minimal human impact. It's time to view our gardens as part of a wider ecosystem

BRITT WILLOUGHBY DYER



## Tom Massey

### Sensitive approach

With excessive heat and subsequent drought in the summer, along with more frequent storms and an increase in unpredictable weather events, resilient garden design has become really important. We need to be designing gardens that can tolerate current conditions but are also adaptable and able to deal with the climate of the future, which could be significantly different in a matter of years – London, for example, is predicted to be more like Barcelona by 2050.

The RHS has banned the use of the word 'pest', encouraging gardeners to value all forms of life in the garden, and to see our gardens as part of a wider ecosystem and landscape. The RHS Chelsea Flower Show is often a good way to measure trends in garden design, and many gardens at this year's show will focus on wildlife, sustainability and human impact, including a garden I am designing for the Royal Entomological Society. The garden aims to show visitors how important all insects are, not just the popular and well-known bees and butterflies, but other less beloved and publicised species too.

We, as gardeners, are important to insects' survival through the choices we make, from sensitive hard landscaping and habitat provision to planting for food and shelter, and a more gentle and relaxed approach to aftercare and maintenance.

[tommassey.co.uk](http://tommassey.co.uk)



# approach Reliable planting pleasures

MATTHEW EVERINGTON



## Matthew Childs

### Reliable planting

The theme of gardens as a

vehicle for us to reconnect with nature and in turn support wildlife and heal the environment will continue into 2023. A long, hot, dry summer last year was tangible evidence for many gardeners that changes are afoot, and we need to adapt our approach to how we make and look after gardens.

This year will see a focus on how a more sustainable garden is something positive that can enrich our lives. I envisage an approach to sustainability that sees gardens as joyful spaces where people, plants and wildlife can be mutually beneficial to each other. A good example of this is the growth in natural swimming ponds; fun for people and great watery habitats for wildlife too.

Choice of materials will again have a sustainable focus, with particular interest in reusing materials such as crushed concrete as a growing medium and mulch, as seen in the Walled Garden at Knepp Castle. Expect to see an even looser, lighter approach to hard landscaping with the odd pile of building rubble left in the garden, like the remnants of a ruin, to provide habitat for bugs, while also freeing people to loosen up a bit when it comes to garden style and maintenance.

Finally, plant choice will become more about reliability than conforming to a stereotype

of natural aesthetic. Important factors will be drought tolerance, successful planting communities and year-round colour and interest that makes us smile and is also beneficial to pollinating insects and wildlife. [matthewchildsdesign.co.uk](http://matthewchildsdesign.co.uk)

CHARLIE HOPKINSON



## Jinny Blom

### Simple pleasures

I think the next few years are

going to be very 'hands on' in design, with people doing it for themselves much more. We are planning lots of cutting and vegetable gardens, chicken coops and small paddocks. There will be far less formality; people want to feel closer to self-sufficiency. We are all conscious of our dislocation from our food sources, and people want to change that. Insecurity around the world is encouraging us to hunker down, enjoy what we have and make the most of simple pleasures: fire pits, ghillie kettles, camping out; wild swimming and being in the fresh air; keeping bees and supporting the fragile chains of the natural order of things; caring for precious resources, such as water; and generally being much cannier.

[jinnyblom.com](http://jinnyblom.com) ▷

People want to feel closer to self-sufficiency. We are all conscious of our dislocation from our food sources, and people want to change that

JINNY BLOM



# Reusing Design trends 2023 Gardens with Outdoor living X

Growing organically, cutting down on watering, and using local materials with a low-carbon footprint are more and more important

KRISTINA CLODE

CHARLIE HOPKINSON



## Jo Thompson

### Shifts in colour

I'm seeing in clients an ever-increasing willingness to consider more soft, as opposed to hard, landscaping: planting areas coming up to the house with a sensible amount of terrace space for dining, and very much moving away from the notion of sweeping terraces across the back of the house simply for the sake of it. This is right across the board, from small gardens through to larger plots; the idea of gleaming, paved ostentation is firmly out of the window.

My planting style has always been natural and romantic, and I'm delighted to see that this is now considered mainstream. The key to the visual success of this approach is an informed use of colour. I'm currently working on a lot of plant-driven landscapes, where the shifts of colour are key to the success of the planting: seasonal changes from flowering bulbs through shrub roses and then hydrangeas to autumn foliage colour, with a focus on atmospheres created through careful plant choices.

While social media will always have its place, the search for the perfect picture can sometimes undermine the confidence of beginners, and so I'm delighted when I come across accounts and newsletters whose content is more authentic. My own *The Gardening Mind*, available on Substack, is intended as an honest and open conversation, something that more and more people are relieved to find. [jothompson-garden-design.co.uk](http://jothompson-garden-design.co.uk)



## Kristina Clode

### Gardens with a conscience

In recent years, many people have been reawakened to nature and the value of their outdoor space, and are willing to invest not only in a beautiful garden, but in one with a conscience. Creating biodiverse habitats for wildlife, gardening using organic principles and sympathetic techniques, planting the right plant in the right place to cut down or eliminate watering altogether, and using local and natural materials that have a reduced-carbon footprint and can be easily recycled/repurposed at the end of their life, are all increasingly important. My naturalistic gardens use an exciting mix of native and exotic plants that prolong the season of interest, while allowing self-seeded wildflowers in spaces between plants, encouraging spontaneity and reducing the need for weeding. I often include perennial wildflower meadows in gardens, which support huge amounts of life, subtly change over time and only need to be cut once a year. [kristinaclodegardendesign.co.uk](http://kristinaclodegardendesign.co.uk)



KATIE SPICER

## Pollyanna Wilkinson

### Outdoor living

I have noticed a real shift in how much people value and interact with their gardens. The mindset of the garden as



# materials a conscience xeriscaping

an afterthought has been replaced with a celebration of the vast potential that outdoor spaces and gardens offer. Clients now look to maximise the potential for outdoor living in ways that suit their specific lifestyles and priorities. As such, gardens are becoming more tailored in terms of use – whether it be a space for parties and entertaining or for solitude and retreat. And despite (or perhaps because of) the unpredictable British weather, we are seeing more interest in making the garden more useable throughout the year, with requests varying from covered cooking and dining spaces, to cosy nooks and fireplaces for the cooler months.  
[pollyannawilkinson.com](http://pollyannawilkinson.com)



## Harry Holding

### Xeriscaping

After last year's summer of heatwaves and hosepipe bans, and swathes of park trees losing their leaves, this year's gardens will trend towards xeriscaping, focusing on drought-tolerant planting. Be it through necessity or choice, 2023 and beyond will see us adapting to new weather patterns, creating gardens that are low maintenance and drought resistant.

As a design studio, we champion this sustainable ethos, choosing plants that can adapt both to summer droughts and the UK's winter wet. We measure our schemes for their resilience and longevity, ensuring they delight our clients while being positive for the planet. It's time to prepare for the future and embrace an

increasingly available palette of plants drawn from warmer climates. Gone should be the days spent intensively watering or irrigating our borders; instead, bring on low-input gardens that give us the time to sit back and enjoy our outdoor spaces.  
[harryholding.co.uk](http://harryholding.co.uk)



GINGERHOLT

## Manoj Malde

### Reusing materials

Clients increasingly want to make informed, sustainable choices, so we find ourselves steering them away from artificial grass due to its detrimental impact on the environment. There is greater empathy towards recycling, with a trend for existing hard-landscape materials to be reused in a design or crushed to form a sub-base for foundations. Educating our clients about permeability helps both us and them to make better material and installation choices. In our designs, we also aim for a ratio of 60 per cent planting to 40 per cent hard landscaping.

More and more clients are requesting a more natural, less manicured garden with an emphasis on planting and habitat for wildlife. Rising costs are also leading to an increased trend towards growing edibles, ornamentals and edimentals together rather than having separate kitchen gardens.

The top request is for colour, with clients being more adventurous in their choices, not just in terms of floral colours, but through garden tiles, furnishings and paints.  
[manojmaldegardendesign.co.uk](http://manojmaldegardendesign.co.uk)

I'm delighted that natural planting is now seen as mainstream. The key to the visual success of this approach is the informed use of colour

JO THOMPSON



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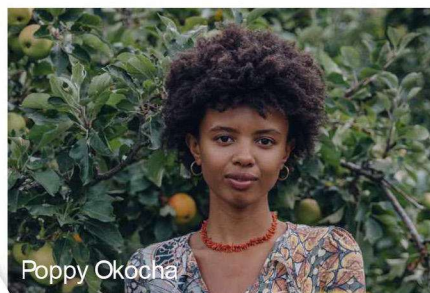
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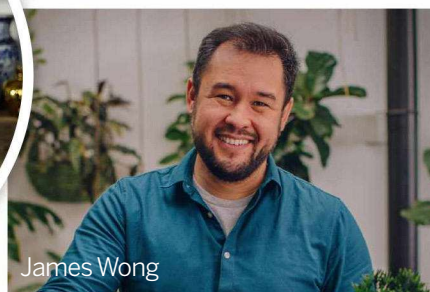
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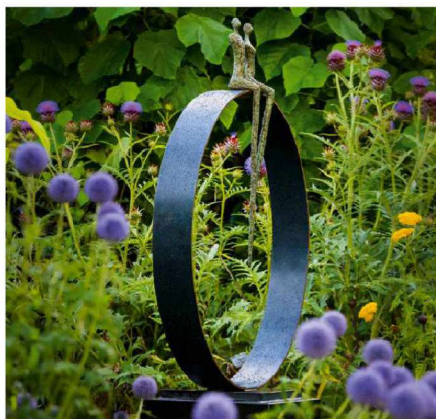


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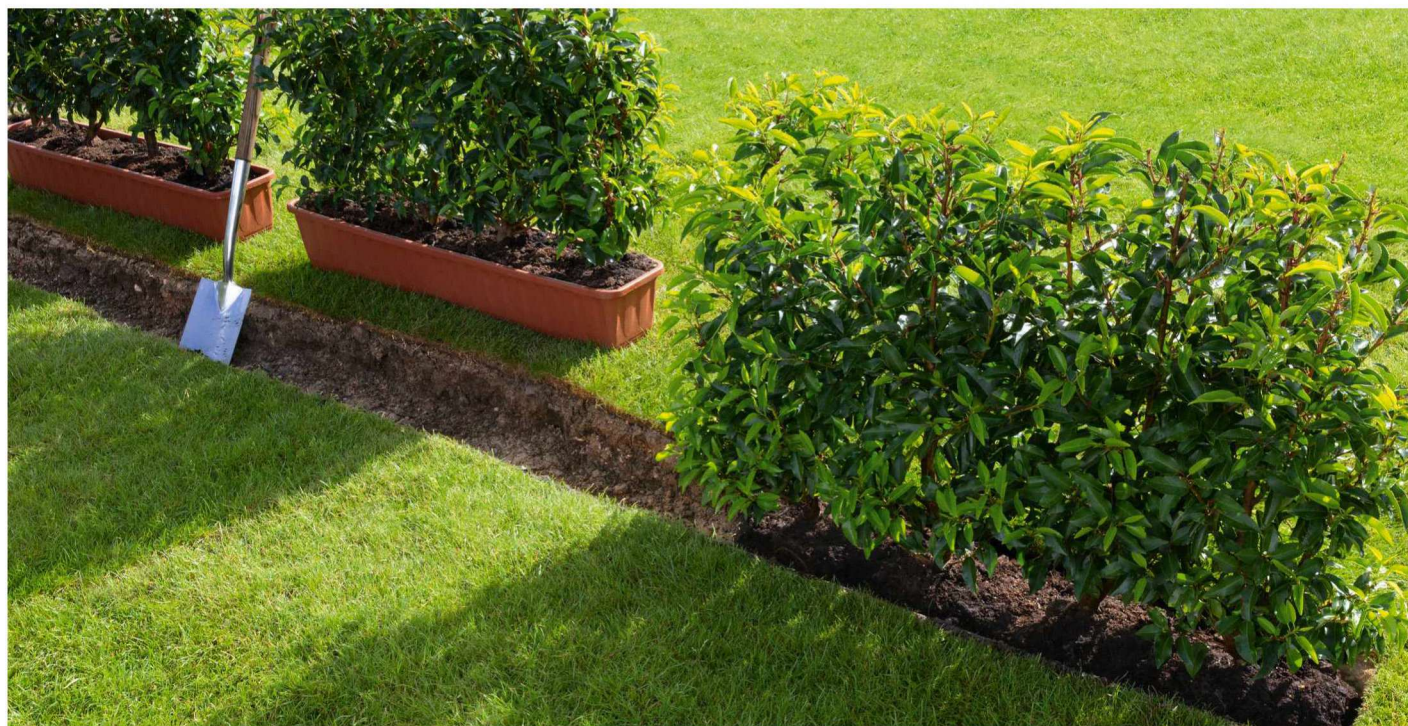
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# DOWNTOOLS

*Book reviews, the crossword and Alice Vincent*



Find out more about the restoration of a glorious but little-known Monmouthshire garden in *Mounton House* by Helena Gerrish, reviewed on page 98.

JOHN CAMPBELL





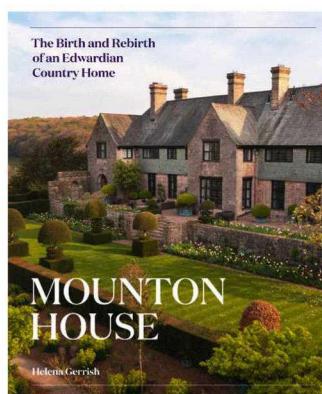
**GRANDI GIARDINI  
ITALIANI: THE ESSENCE  
OF PARADISE**

by Judith Wade,  
Delfina Rattazzi and  
Caterina Napoleone

Franco Maria Ricci, £67  
ISBN 979-1280294050

*This magnificent celebration of the work of Grandi Giardini Italiani serves as both a history of Italian gardens and a visitors' guide.*

*Helena Attlee is a freelance writer.*



**MOUNTON HOUSE:  
THE BIRTH AND REBIRTH  
OF AN EDWARDIAN  
COUNTRY HOME**

by Helena Gerrish

Lund Humphries, £39.99  
ISBN 978-1848225787

*An absorbing and thoroughly researched portrait of an Edwardian home and garden, bestowing long-deserved recognition on its creator.*

*Reviewer Claire Masset is a garden writer and publisher.*

Italy had shown little or no interest in its gardens for years by the time Judith Wade founded Grandi Giardini Italiani (Great Italian Gardens) in 1997. The rate of attrition had been high since the Second World War made luxuries such as gardeners unaffordable, and important historic gardens all over Italy had been sliding ever closer to dereliction. Grandi Giardini Italiani turned the tide, inspiring owners to pay for their gardens' upkeep by opening their gates to the public and offering the practical advice and effective publicity needed for such a venture. This lavishly illustrated book reveals exactly how effective these ingredients have been in creating a thriving new culture of gardens in Italy. When I say lavishly illustrated, you must recalibrate your understanding of lavish, for here double-page spreads follow each other in a feast of glorious images of gardens old and new from some of the best garden

photographers of our age, alongside unusual historic prints and posters.

This is much more than a picture book, however. Delfina Rattazzi gives an expansive account of all of the gardens, and instead of the typical geographical itinerary you might expect, she arranges them under imaginative themes such as inventive, esoteric, gardens on islands, gardens overlooking lakes or gardens in mountain foothills.

Caterina Napoleone's contribution is an unusual anthology of garden-associated writing drawn from ancient and modern sources all over the world, while Judith Wade gives us a very personal insight into the history of the organisation she founded.

Turn to the regional index if you wish to use the book as a guide, and treat it as your invitation to take back roads to a different Italy, where tourists are the exception and the owners of both historic gardens and brand new landscapes will welcome you with open arms.

Mounton House was the greatest project of garden designer and architectural editor of *Country Life*, Henry Avray Tipping (1855-1933). Set in the Monmouthshire countryside, this vast country house, with an equally expansive garden, was designed to showcase his expertise in architecture and horticulture. Unfortunately, within weeks of the building's completion, the First World War had erupted. Very few guests came to see Tipping's creation during the war years and eventually he gave up the estate, which locals referred to as 'Tipping's folly'. Over time, the house was neglected and the gardens became overgrown.

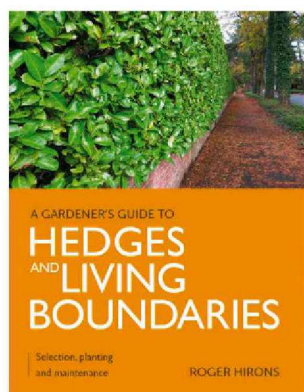
Fast-forward 100 years and Mounton is enjoying an unexpected revival. The house has been painstakingly restored and the gardens are being sensitively reimaged by award-winning designer, Arne Maynard. Author Helena Gerrish tells the full story of Mounton's creation and recreation. Gerrish is something of a Tipping expert, having

previously penned a study of his life and work, *Edwardian Country Life: The Story of H. Avray Tipping*. As the owner of High Glanau – another of Tipping's creations – she has an intimate knowledge of his homes and gardens.

There is no doubt this book covers a niche subject, yet it has broad appeal. The writing is clear and engaging, the photographs – both archival and contemporary – stunning, and the layout elegant. Like his friends Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens, Tipping created gardens with good bones and luxurious plantings, designed to work harmoniously with their natural and architectural setting. And like William Robinson – for whom he wrote many articles for *The Garden* – he was a knowledgeable plantsman, keen to experiment with new varieties. He also displayed a liking for wild areas. For all these reasons, and more, Tipping should be rightly restored alongside these household names. Gerrish is making sure of it.



# BOOK REVIEWS



**A GARDENER'S GUIDE TO HEDGES AND LIVING BOUNDARIES: SELECTION, PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE**  
by Roger Hirons

The Crowood Press, £16.99  
ISBN 978-0719841255

*A fantastic practical guide to planning and planting a hedge or living boundary, no matter how experienced you might be.*

*Reviewer Martin Ogle is a horticulturist and garden designer.*

We have all experienced in one way or another a hedge or living boundary that has either got too tall or too wide, has adversely affected our own or a neighbour's garden, or even damaged neighbouring properties. As author Roger Hirons points out in his introduction to *A Gardener's Guide to Hedges and Living Boundaries*, whatever you decide to plant as a living divide, it will affect at least one other person who lives on the other side of it. In this book you will find details of all of the factors that should rightly be considered when selecting and planting a hedge.

This book will be of use to gardeners of any ilk – seasoned enthusiasts and hobby gardeners as well as landscape architects and designers. Hirons provides plenty of detailed and expert advice, whether you're planting a new hedge from scratch, restoring a neglected one or creating softer internal divides within a space.

Environmentally, hedges have a huge role to play as we

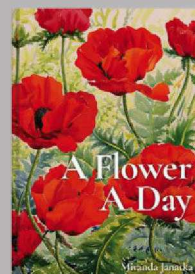
seek to tackle climate change, something that is clearly outlined early in the book. Hedges offer numerous benefits for wildlife, providing habitat as well as vital food sources, and the author also points out that a living divide, rather than a fence, creates a wonderful natural corridor through which wildlife can freely pass.

From the initial assessment and preparation of a site, to design and planning and planting and training, this book should be your go-to practical guide when planting or caring for a hedge or living boundary. It provides a comprehensive list of hedging plants, climbers and trees that would all make great selections for the task, as well as a chapter on extending, maintaining and rehabilitating existing hedges. The images are pertinent and the illustrations clear.

The book ends with common pitfalls – a prudent inclusion, so that you can avoid making those all-too-common hedge-planting mistakes.

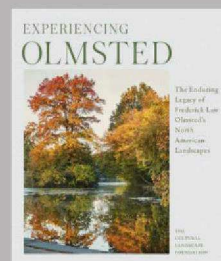
## Other books

More new releases, including the respective life and times of a jobbing horticulturist and a landscape architectural great.



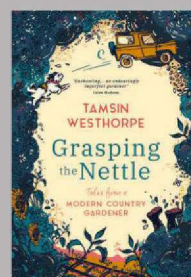
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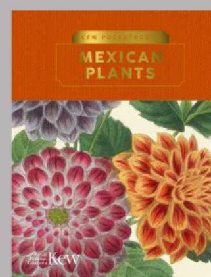
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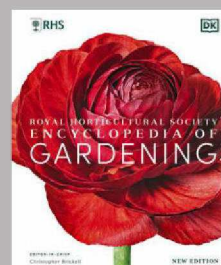
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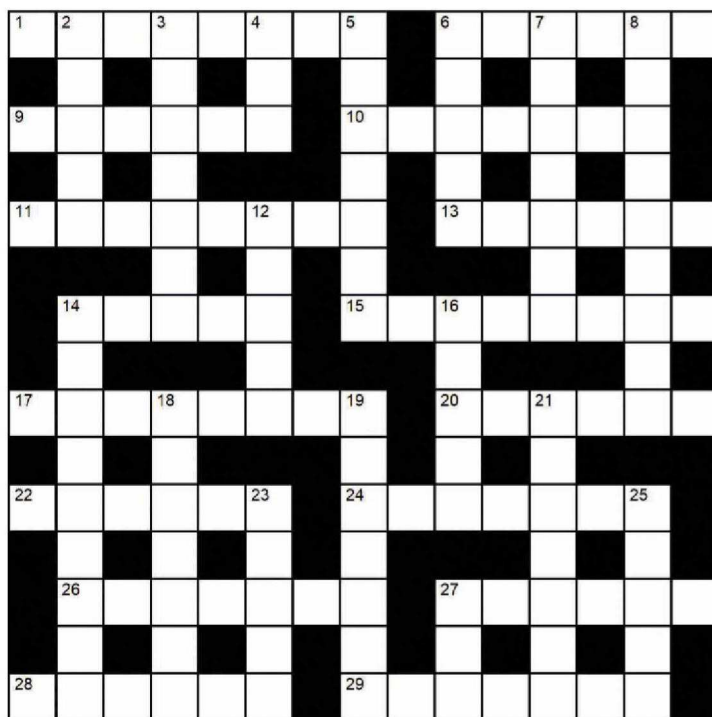
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# Crossword



## ACROSS

1 Plant, genus *Origanum*, used as a herb – Jo confused with marram (8)  
6 Suppose *Selinum* includes this genus of herbaceous perennials with white umbels (6)  
9 Egremont is a variety of this type of apple (6)  
10 Oxfordshire house with classic William Kent garden – ruined our hams! (7)  
11 Collectively, a flower's petals and sepals – hint, pear affected (8)  
13 Royal colour of loosestrife, *Lythrum salicaria* (6)  
14 Fiery red/yellow helenium (Mariachi Series) ... in Corfu eg orangery (5)  
15 Saintry, patriotic name of a mix of red and white sweet peas (2,6)  
17 Reddish-purple bergamot – has a sting in its tail? (8)  
20 Genus of catmint plant – carmine petals in part (6)  
22 Plant's lateral root that forms a new plant ... to counterbalance (6)  
24 A crisphead lettuce that's a danger in the main! (7)  
26 Like side shoot growths ... are tall, twisting (7)  
27 Eg trug or punnet (6)  
28 A caramel/pink *Rudbeckia* – for a vast desert (6)  
29 Popular rock-garden plant with white, yellow or mauve flowers – helps make Italy's summer! (7)

## DOWN

2 Sky-blue colour of some gentians (5)  
3 Fragrant climber – after winter it has yellow flowers! (7)  
4 Over-watering may cause this? Nonsense! (3)  
5 Genus of sweet cicely – one of the biblical Magi gifts is? (7)  
6 Puzzle – remains of axed tree (5)  
7 A rare begonia with icy-white leaves, green veins – a musical joke (7)  
8 A yellow-tinted white *Potentilla fruticosa* – focus of public attention? (9)  
12 I moan about a group of large rhododendron cultivars (5)  
14 Term meaning fig-leaved eg as the leaves of hollyhock *Alcea* ... official I upset (9)  
16 A magnolia with maroon, tulip-shaped flowers – in part, nitrogen I expect (5)  
18 A striped pink/white *Cosmos bipinnatus* – changed to aster! (7)  
19 Small shrub with pink, bell-shaped racemes – ie all in disarray (7)  
21 Flattens and dries flowers – and squashes? (7)  
23 An English F1 organic cucumber – I try a variety (5)  
25 A hybrid series of nasturtium ... shine like polished metal (5)  
27 The laurel bush (3)

• Solutions to this issue's crossword will be printed in the February issue

## SOLUTIONS TO DECEMBER CROSSWORD

ACROSS 7 Rebuthia 10 Ideal 12 Orache 14 Sloe 15 Ragged Robin 16 Iris 17 Weeds 18 Laser 19 Dessert 21 Setaria 24 Needles 26/44 down Deadhead 27 Iberis 28 Dittany 30 Insect 32 Snip 34 Torenia 36 Anemone 37 Fulgens 39 Becky 42 Desire 43 Coum 44 Hippeastrum 45 Oils 47 Beesia 48 Raise 49 Snowman. DOWN 1 Aril 2 Pteris 3 Bidens 4 Pear tree 5 Mown 6 Christmas Cheer 8 Befeater 9 Angel 11 Lobed 13 Aniseed 17 Wishbone flower 20 Sessile 22 Rosette 23 Alder 24 Nut 25 Layla 29 Ada 31 Snowstorm 33 Phlomis 35 Noble fir 38 Super 40 Cosmea 41 Yorks 42 Damson 46 Ling.

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# GARDENS

ILLUSTRATED

## FEBRUARY

- Grower and florist Bex Partridge brings dried flowers to the fore in her creative arrangements
- Specialists Morlas Plants on the appeal of the snowdrop
- Using heathers for winter colour in a sloping garden
- Tom Stuart-Smith reveals his latest venture at Serge Hill where plantsmanship and community are key
- Heritage hyacinths and the collector who can't resist them
  - Beth Chatto's head gardener Åsa Gregers-Warg starts a new series of seasonal plants



ANDREW MONTGOMERY, JASON INGRAM, EVA NEMETH, RICHARD BLOOM



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# SLEEPING BEAUTY

Beyond the frenzy of seed sowing, winter is the season of snoozing and taking stock, says **Alice Vincent**, and letting your garden rest up ahead of the demands of spring

ILLUSTRATION ALICE PATTULLO

I have long been unconvinced by the New Year, New You notion. I'm an equinox baby, and consider September the thinking person's January: new pencil cases and golden light, rather than January's meagre offering of days that are grisly, short and somehow steeped in vague regret. The residue of Christmas lingers uninvited, like the last bundle of fairy lights that won't go back in the box. In south London, where I live, the pavements are littered with browning Christmas trees. There are those who have the energy and impetus to lace up their trainers and do laps of the park, and then there are people like me, who like to hunker down for most of the day before possibly considering a walk.

I'm in good company. On 2 January 1931, Virginia Woolf wrote a diary entry that I revisit often: 'Here are my resolutions for the next three months; the next lap of the year. To have none. Not to be tied... To go out yes – but stay at home in spite of being asked.' It reflects a message smuggled into *A Room of One's Own*, the book borne of the feminist lectures she gave at Girton and Newnham colleges, Cambridge, a few years earlier: 'No need to hurry, no need to sparkle, no need to be anybody but oneself.'

It's a mantra I recite to myself often. For a while it sat on a torn-out scrap of lined A4 on my desk, the ink run from some more energetic plant watering. It applies well to many aspects of life, but at this time of year it applies particularly well to the garden. No need, garden, to hurry or sparkle. No need to be anything but itself.

As gardeners, we can learn from this too. I barely grow edibles – certainly not in a manner that necessitates seed trays and heated propagators. I'm unwilling to give over the time or space in the garden that they need at this point in my life. But when I did, January became a kind of mad race to sow tomato and chilli seeds. Despite general consensus being that seeds will germinate more quickly, and grow more strongly, if sown after the vernal equinox, when the days are longer, recent years have seen a shift to a kind of competitive seed-sowing frenzy, played out on social media (where else).

Sowing seeds is an inherently hopeful act, and after the fuss and the mania of Christmas, there's something deeply appealing about the simplicity of taking a pot of soil and placing small things in it with the determination that they will grow.

If that's what you need to tug you into the new year and out of a winter slump, be my guest.

I, however, will be unhurried and unsparkly, in a continuation of how I've spent much of the past year gardening: standing back, looking on, watching it all unfold. It might look like doing nothing – indeed, I am writing this in bed – but I prefer to think of it as more of a crucial dormancy. Gardens wind down in the winter with good reason. We are in the season of snoozing and taking stock, of resting up and rejuvenating before the energy of spring and summer ahead. Nothing can bloom all the time; we shouldn't expect the same of ourselves.

I spent half of last January isolating with Covid. When I wasn't binge-watching *Below Deck* in a fugue state, I kept track of time by watching the sunlight move around the living room. I couldn't smell the forced paperwhite daffodils that filled the mantelpiece, but I could see them unfold as the days passed. I craved a walk around the park, catching the smell of daphne on the air and watching the day mellow into pink. January: not being anything but itself. □



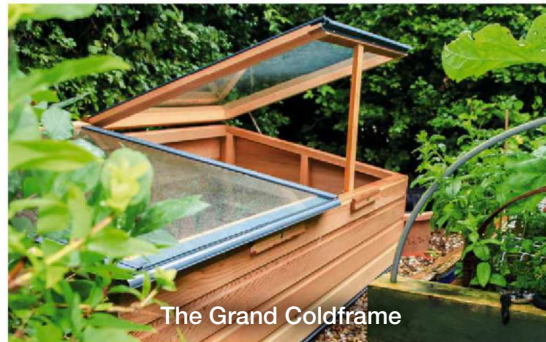
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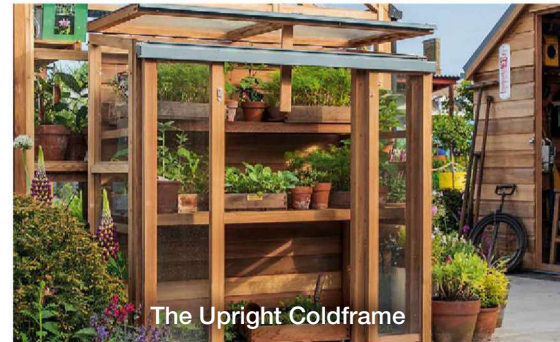
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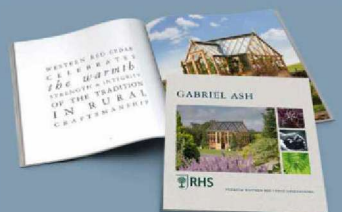
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